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AN INTRODUCTORY
HISTORY OF ENGLAND

VOL. V

BY C. R. L. FLETCHER

AN INTRODUCTORY HISTORY
OF ENGLAND

Vol. I. To 1485. Vol. II. 1485-1660.
Vol. III. 1660-1792. Vol. IV. 1792-1815.

THE MAKING OF WESTERN
EUROPE

Being an attempt to trace the fortunes
of the children of the Roman Empire.
Vol. I. 300-1000. Vol. II. 1000-1190.

THE GREAT WAR, 1914-18
A Brief Sketch.

LIFE OF EDMOND WARRE, D.D.,
sometime Head Master and Provost of
Eton College.

AN INTRODUCTORY HISTORY OF ENGLAND

FROM WATERLOO TO 1880

BY C. R. L. FLETCHER

FORMERLY FELLOW OF ALL SOULS AND MAGDALEN COLLEGES, OXFORD

ASSOCIÉ ÉTRANGER DE L'ÉCOLE PALATINE D'AVIGNON

WITH MAPS, ETC.



LONDON

JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET, W.

First Edition May 1923

PRINTED IN ENGLAND
AT THE OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
BY FREDERICK HALL

DEDICATION

In dedicating this book to you, my last (1918-19) Division at Eton, I am not forgetting my first and best, of 1914-15. But it would be profane to think of those boys in such a connexion as this, for half of them lie 'between the Trench and the Wall, or before the Scaean Gate'. Nomen eorum vivit in saecula saeculorum. So I choose you, who were too young to go and fight; and for two reasons, first because your affection helped me to live through that last awful year, in the earlier months of which it seemed as if all must be lost; and secondly for the much more prosaic reason that you, miserable modernists as most of you were, bullied me into attempting this gruesome task, for which I have no natural aptitude. The memory of that delightful bullying will always be with me, as will your half-mutinous upturned faces; but I kept you in order, you know. I can still see you on the benches in No. 1 Queen's Schools: Ralph, skilfully picking my facts to pieces, and giving a little toss of your tawny head as you began to construe Homer (do you remember our letter from Pallas Athene herself?); Dick, protesting, after a hard game of football, that you thought the study of Machiavelli's Prince in the original was bad for your morals; Clive, so great a man all round that we had to call you 'Mr. B.'; Maurice, so sparing of paper, so prodigal of ink, laurea donatus Balliolensi before you were seventeen; David, skilled alike with pen and pencil (I wonder what became of the caricatures of me which you, no doubt, drew in School); Jim, who came to me late but bade fair to fly to the top in history, even as you flew hurdles, miles, and steeplechases; Autolycus, who came later still, but thought 'once a sheep, always a sheep'; Bill, who always knew your lesson—and, it must be confessed, some others of you who didn't. Then there was that empty seat which we left, in the Armistice Half, with the feeling that our dear lost Toby might sometimes come in the spirit and sit with us through a lesson. I cannot name you all, but those whom I omit must forgive me; they were none the less loved and not less loyal. I think it can have fallen to the lot of few 'temporary' schoolmasters to be treated as you all treated me. Therefore, gratissimo animo, to you I make this humble dedication.

P R E F A C E

I FEEL that I owe some apology for tormenting my readers with yet another volume on the History of Great Britain, and that a volume brought down to within forty-three years of the present time; for at the end of my fourth volume, published fourteen years ago, I laid down the year 1815 as the limit of historical time. I have only two excuses for having yielded to the temptation to go on, and the first of these will be found in the dedication of this fifth volume. The second is, indeed, hardly an excuse at all; to wit, the pleasure of scribbling, a pleasure perhaps inseparable from the mild idleness of old age. I am not unlike that Scottish minister who was unwilling to leave the pulpit—‘Has he no finished?’ ‘Aye, he’s finished, but he canna stop.’

I fear that many mistakes may be found, for my reading has principally lain in periods earlier than this, of which I only began a special study, for the purpose of compiling this volume. I have to acknowledge most valuable help from two friends—my brother-in-law, Sir Claud Schuster, one of the most expert wielders of the critic’s pruning-knife that it has ever been my lot to meet, and the Reverend Arthur Henry Johnson, my own old tutor, the still active *doyen* of our Oxford teachers, to whom the Modern History School of this University owes twice its

debt to any other living man, and to whom many generations of affectionate pupils owe even more. Both these gentlemen have struggled through the whole of this volume in typescript, and each is equally anxious to disclaim any responsibility for the opinions of the writer. Foot-notes will be found at the beginning of Chapter XI and on pp. 433, 462, Chapter XII, acknowledging special help given towards their compilation.

C. R. L. F.

Oxford, 1923.

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CHAPTER I

CRITICAL YEARS AFTER THE WAR

THE orthodox way to begin a History of the Nineteenth Century is to devote the first chapter to a summary of the political, social, and economic grievances under which Britain was suffering in 1815; to set up, as a series of successive Aunt Sallies (if anybody nowadays knew what an Aunt Sally was), the unreformed Parliament and the absurdities of the franchise; the financial system as exploited for the benefit of wicked protectionists; the Poor Law, wages, farmers, and, above all, landlords; the misgovernment of Ireland; the grievances of Dissenters and Catholics; the intolerance of the Church and the stupidities of its bishops; the criminal law, with highly flavoured illustrations of the numbers of crimes which would lead to the gallows or to Botany Bay; and, finally, the men who upheld all these things, Lords Eldon, Sidmouth, Liverpool, and Castlereagh. The last-named of these you should specially mark out for denunciation. You should then go on to point out that, after all, the crimes and follies which you have just been enumerating were only what must naturally be expected at the end of a long course of Tory Government; and this will lead you to a due adjustment of the halo on the heads of their virtuous, high-minded, patriotic, and intelligent opponents, whose crowned and anointed champion is soon to be Charles, second Earl Grey. If you wish (and nowadays you will at least affect to wish) to be held moderate, unprejudiced, and of a judicial mind, you will occasionally throw in a few remarks to the effect that the old unreformed Parliament gave opportunities for youthful talent to rise to the top independently of birth or wealth, and herein you will be especially bound to pray for

Mr. Canning; you will readily acknowledge that Stowell and Eldon and Tenterden were great lawyers, and that the level of education among public men was extraordinarily high, although (unfortunately) that education was based wholly upon the Classics and the Mathematics.

Throughout this chapter your great weapon will be statistics and always more statistics, while your method of employing them will be that which Lord Macaulay has made familiar in his famous chapter on the reign of Charles II; you will be careful to forget the *dictum* that almost any proposition can be proved by a judicious application of statistics. And you will finally clinch your argument by pointing to the considerable change which took place in 1822 with the advent of Canning and Peel to power in place of Castlereagh and Sidmouth, although all hopes of what you will call 'serious reform' will have to wait till the Bill of 1832 shall have become law.

I don't say this is a bad way to begin; indeed I said it was the orthodox way, which is a presumption in its favour. But it must also be remembered that the step from orthodoxy to convention is neither a long nor an unusual one; and I think that a conventional treatment of History may easily become misleading. Lord Tennyson uttered a great moral and political truth when he said :

the course of Time will swerve,
Crook and turn upon itself in many a backward streaming curve.

Continuous progress in any one direction is not always possible, or, if possible, is not always for the ultimate happiness of mankind. I believe, indeed, that every step which removes shackles and impediments from the path of mankind is good progress, for such removal will spell freedom; but it does not necessarily follow that every step towards giving every individual, educated or uneducated, an equal share in government is also good progress. And it is, on the whole, towards this last—equality, rather than freedom—that the nineteenth century was feeling its way; and now in the twentieth it appears to be leading us straight to anarchy.

May it not then be just one of the 'crooks and swerves of time', destined sooner or later to wear itself out, after which true progress may begin again with some better and higher goal? Few people will, I think, deny that the march of Science, the revolution in Thought, the mechanical discoveries and inventions of the century that followed Waterloo, have been favourable to true progress, for they have led to the alleviation of pain, the freedom from theological tyranny, the conquest of the surface of the earth, the harnessing of river, sea, and air to do man's bidding; and perhaps five hundred years hence our descendants will find in these things the only history of the period which will be worth remembering. Then they will forget democracy and reform bills, and the nonentities that rose to power by votes and cajolery; and, while they will be obliged to admit that there were no great statesmen¹ in the period, they will say, 'but the nation as a whole was very great'.

The ideal history of the past hundred years, then, would be one in which Simpson and Faraday would be of more account than Peel, Darwin and Kelvin than Gladstone and Disraeli; one which treated of 'politics' only so far as these were concerned with the removal of all shackles on freedom, and, for the rest, confined itself to recording the triumphs of the sciences, the arts and the crafts of life in the widest sense of these words. But we are too near to the epoch in which these triumphs were achieved to estimate them rightly; even if we were not, I am too ignorant of all scientific matters to expound them rightly; and, finally, the young men at whose desire this volume was begun are still too much imbued with the notion that the political life of a country is that which is most worthy of record. So I must pursue the jog-trot path, which far abler historians have trodden before me, with the hope that, here and there, I may throw a somewhat novel light on causes and on persons, who have been deified or gibbeted according to their success or failure in 'politics'.

¹ Castlereagh, though he lived till 1822, really belongs to the previous period. In our period Peel has the best claim.

The last five years of George III's reign were, for many and obvious reasons, a miserable period—the first years of peace after twenty-two years of exhausting war. They have many lessons for us to-day; for most of their phenomena have reappeared in Britain since the end of our own shorter, but infinitely more exhausting, war. If you take a file of any newspaper of to-day and compare it with a file of *The Times* of those years you will see that much the same sort of remedies for present discontents—including a repudiation of the National Debt—were being suggested then as now. The main differences, indeed, seem to be two; first, that while our prices began with an enormous rise and have hardly yet begun to fall, theirs alarmed our grandfathers by the most violent fluctuation down and up, though on the whole by a steady fall; and secondly, that the Ministry of 1815 knew its own mind (I do not say it was a right mind) while our 'post-war' ministers do not, or perhaps have no mind to know. The former, by strength of character and will, tided over the bad years without a revolution;¹ it remains to be seen whether the latter will be as brave, as skilful, or as fortunate.

There is really little to separate these last five years of George III from the first seven years of his successor. The death of the old king in January 1820 made little difference in the power or influence of the Crown. George IV had been Prince-Regent since 1811; his unrestricted tenure of the office was almost contemporary with the advent of Lord Liverpool to the Treasury (May 1812). There have been few more worthless regents or kings in any country than George IV, and it was certainly a cruel fate that condemned such able ministers as Castlereagh, Liverpool, and Canning to have to simulate loyalty to such a man. George had some talent for amusing conversation, and some appreciation of good literature, but that is about all that can be said for him.

¹ They were at least not tempted into desertion of their late allies by the machinations of German Jews and international financiers, nor into shaping their foreign policy to meet the wishes of American politicians or so-called 'Labour' agitators.

He thought it an excellent jest to invite the Sheriffs of London to dinner, to make them drunk, and to take care that in that condition they were presented to his aged mother Queen Charlotte.¹ He described one, but only one, of his own greatest vices when he said to Lady Spencer, 'You know I don't speak the truth, and my brothers don't. We have always been brought up badly; the Queen taught us to equivocate.'² His cousin-wife Caroline of Brunswick was certainly as vulgar, and probably as wicked as himself; they had been separated since 1796, and the Princess was now living in doubtful company in Italy. Their only daughter Princess Charlotte, heiress to the throne, was the only legitimate descendant of the nine sons of George III. She was just going to be married (May 1816) to Leopold of Saxe-Coburg, afterwards King of the Belgians, and she died in child-birth in the next year. She could already display the headstrong bad manners of her mother, and promised to inherit that fatness of body which was the only thing of which her shameless father was ashamed. He was frantically jealous of her popularity, which was, indeed, only the result of the contempt with which all decent people regarded him.

The Regent's brothers were made of tougher fibre, but one and all were heartlessly extravagant and pleasure-seeking; Charles Greville, who disliked Royalties, has a good word to say for the Duke of York, praising his good temper, his truthfulness and sincerity; he was 'the only one of the princes who had the feelings of an English gentleman'. York was a fairly good Commander-in-Chief of the Army till his death in 1827. Clarence, the sailor, we shall get to know as King William IV, a man of singularly ill-balanced mind; Augustus, Duke of Sussex, the King's sixth son, played at being an intellectual, and had some interest in Science; he also, in order to annoy his father and mother, played at being an extreme Whig or Radical. With Kent (except that he was the father of good Queen Victoria), Cambridge, and Cumberland, it is not likely that any one

¹ Lord Colchester's *Diary*, Jan. 27, 1816.

² Torrens, *Memoirs of Lord Melbourne*, ed. 1890, 102.

now wishes to make closer acquaintance. When Princess Charlotte died in 1817 those of the Princes who had not already got lawful wives hastened to wed dull, if virtuous, German females in order to beget heirs to the Crown, and also in order to squeeze larger sums out of Parliament on that consideration; their allowances were already enormous. Yet the greed and extravagance of all of them put together was a drop in the bucket compared to that of the Regent. Queen Charlotte lived till the autumn of 1818: she at least was a model of virtue, and a kind nurse to her poor old husband; Lord Melbourne, who first went to Court in 1803, remembered thinking her still rather pretty. There were also two daughters married to Germans, a Duchess of Gloucester who married her cousin, and two unmarried princesses. If we take them all round few royal families have been so stupid and so expensive. Victoria had to rescue the Crown from a very considerable abyss; she had to create a wholly new tradition of royalty, and most nobly she fulfilled her task.

When we turn to the Ministry of the years 1815-22 we shall have, I think, to accord high praise to Lord Liverpool for the way in which he faced, and in the end surmounted, crisis after crisis in a peculiarly difficult period. He was only forty-five at the date of Waterloo, but he had been one of the most loyal and industrious of 'Pitt's young men', and he had been in office of one kind or another since he was twenty-three. Without possessing originality or distinguished talents, he was the key-stone of the arch, and kept together, by his infinite patience, tact, and conciliation, a team of men of the most various opinions. His only strong man in the House of Commons was Lord Castlereagh, and Castlereagh himself was worth a host. One year older than Liverpool, he died six years before him, worn out, like him, in the service of his country. He had been the real victor over Napoleon, the real cement that kept the Allies (such Allies!) united for that victory. His main interest lay in foreign politics, and he was less at his ease when he had to face the task of paying the bill for our triumphs. But he faced it

bravely: he was the last statesman who *governed* the kingdom, and, as the vocal part of the kingdom disliked being governed, his memory has been loaded with undeserved obloquy. Lord Sidmouth, better remembered as the Henry Addington of 1801-3, was Home Secretary till 1822, an industrious mediocrity, who supported all repressive measures but initiated nothing; Samuel Bamford, the Radical weaver, who was arrested on suspicion of high treason in March 1817 and examined before the Privy Council, mentions that the 'whole council listened to him with patience and attention' but picks out Sidmouth's courtesy for special praise.¹ Lord Eldon as Chancellor was a delightful old gentleman, who had been a special friend of George III, but he was entirely averse from all steps in the direction of reform. Though undoubtedly a great lawyer, he was not of the calibre of his own brother Stowell or of Mansfield; but he did more to harmonize and elucidate the principles of Equity than any one since his great predecessor Lord Hardwicke. Vansittart was a singularly undistinguished Chancellor of the Exchequer from 1812 to 1823, but he must be allowed the merit of having at least *wished* in 1816 to continue the income-tax in order to pay the war-bill. Bathurst, and Robinson who came in as President of the Board of Trade in 1818, were equally undistinguished ('why Fred Robinson is in the Cabinet I do not know, nor do I recollect to whom he is supposed more particularly to belong',² wrote Mr. Legge of the Navy Office). In subordinate offices were Huskisson and Palmerston; and that rising young man Robert Peel as Chief Secretary was governing Ireland with the needful strong hand. Lord Ellenborough, though Lord Chief Justice, had a seat in the Cabinet—and that was a bad principle. He was one of the worst defenders of the severity of the old criminal law which Peel was soon to mitigate. Canning

¹ Sidmouth said to him, 'We are not averse to the subject petitioning for redress of grievances: it is the manner in which that right has been exercised that we condemn'. (*Passages in the Life of a Radical*, ed. 1893, ii. 128.)

² Colchester, iii. 38.

joined the Ministry as President of the Board of Control (i. e. India Office) in 1816, and the Duke of Wellington came in as Master-General of the Ordnance in 1818.

It is customary to point to the 'talent' of the Opposition of this period in contrast to the 'stupidity' of the Ministry; but, except in the matter of oratory, it is not very easy to pick out any persons of highly distinguished talents. They seemed at all events to be an ill-compacted body, although Castlereagh did once say to Tierney (who succeeded George Ponsonby as Whig leader in 1817), 'I should like to know the secret of your association'. There were Grenville-Whigs and Grey-Whigs, Romilly- and Mackintosh-Radical-Whigs, there was Joseph Hume, and there was Brougham—Brougham of the *Edinburgh Review* (founded 1802), of London University, Brougham 'the learned friend', 'the President of the Steam-Intellect Society',¹ of whom, when he became Chancellor in 1830, it was said 'it was a pity he didn't know any law as, if he did, he would know something about everything'. But he was a magnificent fighter, and one gets to have a certain respect for a man who will slash at, and slash through, everything. What was the matter with Brougham throughout his long life was vanity.² Equally a free-lance, and one with whom it is even more easy to sympathize, was Sir Francis Burdett, who had won with Lord Cochrane the great Westminster election of 1807, and

¹ This was Peacock's name for the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, founded in 1825. Brougham also founded the London Mechanics' Institute, and began the publication of the 'Library of Useful Knowledge' with a volume entitled *The Pleasures of Science*. University College was founded in 1828, the University of London in 1836.

² Greville once wrote (iii. 86) that Brougham reminded him of the man in *Jonathan Wild* who was a rogue by force of habit, 'and could not keep his hand out of his neighbour's pocket though he knew there was nothing in it, nor from cheating at cards though he knew he wouldn't be paid if he won.' Brougham has no doubt suffered, even more than his rival Lyndhurst, from the humorous malice of Lord Campbell in the famous *Lives of the Chancellors*; indeed, it was he who said that this work, well known to be in progress, 'added to the terrors of death'.

had been sent to the Tower, after defending his own house against the officers of the law, in 1810. His main interest lay in Parliamentary Reform, and when that had been accomplished he veered round and died a fox-hunting Tory. An able man on the same side, one of the few really unselfish and broad-minded Radicals, was Horner, but he died in 1817. The Opposition was indeed unfortunate in a series of deaths, Whitbread 1815, Ponsonby and Horner 1817, Romilly 1818; Romilly was a real loss to the country, for he had been the protagonist in the reform of Criminal Law, and Peel learned much from him. Erskine, an ex-Lord Chancellor, and at one time a great advocate, lived till 1823, and opposed all Government measures in the Lords. Henry Grattan, once the champion of the Irish Parliament, sat in the Imperial Parliament till his death in 1820 and steadily pressed the claims of the Catholics for equality, but he had more oratory than statesmanship, as indeed his earlier career had foreshadowed. A greater man in the same cause was Plunket, who can hardly be described either as Whig or Tory, and who ended his career as Whig Lord Chancellor of Ireland; for the time (1815-22) he was acting with the Grenville Whigs.

Few of the reformers, Whigs or Radicals, acknowledged the debt they all really owed to Jeremy Bentham, 'the Siéyès of Britain', who thought mankind could be made happy for ever by a few elementary principles; he was the great champion of 'natural rights' (as understood by the French Revolution), as opposed to chartered and prescriptive rights. To be condemned to read Bentham's *Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation* would be a sentence little better than that of being confined for life in one of Bentham's model prisons,¹ but a great deal of its matter has been translated into our legal and administrative system. Much of it was expounded to the public by James Mill in his *Westminster Review*, founded in 1824.

It has been surmised, and perhaps rightly, that for practical

¹ Pentonville, opened about 1840, was designed to some extent after Bentham's model.

purposes the strength of the Opposition lay in the House of Lords; but even there the difference between the followers of Charles second Earl Grey and those of William Lord Grenville began to be marked before 1815. Grenville, who had been his cousin Pitt's best supporter till 1801 and his meanest deserter in 1804, was cursed with intolerable family pride and with an equally intolerable self-sufficiency; and, after 1815, though remaining a pro-Catholic and a free-trader, he developed a fear of Radicalism almost equal to Lord Eldon's, and he lived to be equally horrified by the associates and by the Reform Bill of his old friend Grey. And so though refusing, mainly from fastidiousness, to join the Ministry in 1821, he 'allowed', in the next year, some of his henchmen to come in, among them Southey's friend Charles Wynn.

Grey, on the other hand, was consistent. He believed he had the 'Fox tradition' (but no one can say what Fox would have been, or done, had he lived to be old), and that tradition mainly told him to oppose any Government except his own. He had few (political) loves, but his hatreds and prejudices were undying; above all he hated Canning. He said that the three greatest rascals he had ever known were Castlereagh, Talleyrand, and Brougham;¹ yet when he became Prime Minister in 1830 he was obliged to take the third of these for his Chancellor. He represented himself as having at heart but one cause, that of Parliamentary Reform, though it must always remain doubtful what, even in 1830, he understood by the term. The rest of him was pure, if rather dull, aristocrat, of great personal beauty and considerable eloquence; Grenville judged him to be the most finished orator of the day, but in other respects thought very hardly of him.

The 'foreign politics' of the period 1815-32 are so uninteresting that they may well be dismissed in a few words. The Treaty of 1815 had been framed under the impression

¹ Malmesbury, *Memoirs of an Ex-Minister*, i. 36: Grey, according to Mr. Trevelyan (*Lord Grey of the Reform Bill*, 189-91), had not been unfriendly to Brougham before 1826. He was somewhat given to the use of strong language about those whom he disliked.

that such revolutionary upheavals were to be feared in France as might lead to a fresh disturbance of European peace; the chief eastern fortresses of France were, therefore, to be occupied for a term of years by an army of 150,000 men to be paid by the French Government. The Duke of Wellington was chosen by the Four Great Powers to command this army; and so great was his tact, and so healthy was the French desire for peace, that before the end of 1818 the last Allied soldier was withdrawn, and the King of France was admitted to the European Concert in full freedom. To maintain this concert the Four Powers had contemplated, as a sequel to the Treaty of 1815, the foundation of a sort of 'League of Nations', to which the enthusiastic, if untrustworthy, Tsar Alexander of Russia gave the name of the 'Holy Alliance'; and he spoke of the 'sacred principle of Legitimacy' which it was to defend. All the Sovereigns of Europe signed adhesion to this Alliance except Great Britain, Turkey, and the Pope. As for these three, the Turk of those days, in signing any compact with Russia, would resemble the lamb signing a compact with the wolf; while the only 'Holy Alliance' the Pope knew was that between himself and the Jesuits, whose order he had re-established soon after his own restoration to Rome in 1814; who was this Greek-Church heretic that he should be talking of Holy Alliances and putting himself at the head of Christendom? the Pope's *métier* was to remain a Papist. As for Great Britain, the Regent was indeed allowed to write a letter approving of the 'principles of Christian morality' by which the other Sovereigns declared that they intended to 'regulate their policy', but the Duke of Wellington said 'that was all very well but the British Parliament would require something more precise', and Lord Castlereagh, in his private correspondence, characterized it as a 'piece of sublime mysticism and nonsense'. But it is, perhaps, unfair to suggest that the declaration was wholly hypocritical.

Castlereagh, indeed, set a high value on some Concert of the Powers for the maintenance of peace and of the European balance, and he therefore agreed, somewhat unwillingly,

that these Powers should hold periodical congresses, at which either the Sovereigns themselves or their chief ministers should be present. This was the darling notion of Alexander, and Alexander had to be humoured. The position of Russia was then not unlike that of America in 1918-19; she had come comparatively late and unwillingly into the War, of which Britain and Austria had for many years borne the brunt; but the accidents of her geography and her climate had enabled her to ruin Napoleon. She had threatened to be very troublesome at the Congress of Vienna, and it required all the skill of Castlereagh, Talleyrand, and Metternich to stop her. Even Metternich, perhaps even Wellington, was rather hypnotized by the mere magnitude of Russia; Talleyrand and Castlereagh were not, and Canning in after days was going to prove that he was not. Textually the Treaty of 1815 referred to the possibility of fresh disturbances in France, and, had such broken out, Great Britain would have been pledged to assist in repressing them. Castlereagh, however, had no intention of allowing this to be extended to cover the interference of this country in the affairs of other countries such as Naples, Spain, or the lesser German states. He was not going to be a sergeant of European police; if he was 'the uncompromising antagonist of Radicalism at home' he was also 'the resolute opponent of despotism abroad'. But he would act by the peaceful diplomatic means of protocols and protests; if any one or two of the Powers were set upon some particular bit of interference in the concerns of their lesser neighbours, there was generally at least one other that was set against it, and they were seldom all agreed; each had its own axe to grind, and Castlereagh was not going to allow Britain to be the whetstone. Thus, when in 1819 Austria and Prussia agreed to put down Radical disturbances of students in the lesser German states, our minister not only protested but beguiled Alexander into supporting his protest. When in 1820 those two kings of comic opera, Ferdinand of Spain and Ferdinand of Naples, provoked their unhappy subjects into rebellion, Austria was dreadfully alarmed about Naples, and about Piedmont

which caught the fever as well ; while the Bourbon King of France, or rather his ministers, more royalist than himself (for Louis XVIII was a shrewd, sceptical old creature), soon became still more alarmed about Spain. There was a Congress held at Troppau to consider these events, and fierce language was used by Metternich against the revolutionary movement in Italy. Russia maintained that all such matters came within the scope of the Treaty of 1815, and wanted them to be subject to the united decision of the Allies. Even France gave a qualified assent to this doctrine, but the British representative was instructed to protest most energetically. We would send a squadron to Naples to pick up King Ferdinand if he were in danger of his life, but we would do no more.¹ The Congress met again at Laibach in January 1821, and every effort of the Allies to bend Lord Charles Stewart to their will was as vain there as at Troppau.

Before the Spanish question came to a head, Alexander had made two false steps which led before long to the practical dissolution of the Holy Alliance; in the first place he had expressed a wish to march troops right across Europe to help France to crush the Spanish Radicals, and this alarmed not only France, Britain, and the ever-jealous Metternich, but even Alexander's best friend, the King of Prussia; in the second place he had shown symptoms of illogical and greedy interest in the revolts against Turkey which broke out in Greece and in those provinces north of the Danube which we now call Roumania. A fresh Congress was to meet at Verona in October 1822 to discuss these matters. Castlereagh thought them so important and so dangerous that he intended to go thither himself, and he drew up his own instructions, which were to the effect that Great Britain would countenance no joint intervention in Spain; she would

¹ 'Nothing could be so immoral or prejudicial to the character of Governments as the idea that their force was collectively to be prostituted to the support of established power without any consideration of the extent to which it is abused.' (Castlereagh's Dispatch, Oct. 20, 1820.)

consider only her own interests and give her 'good offices' (the regular diplomatic phrase) towards effecting some peaceful settlement. This was the great statesman's last act. In August 1822 his noble brain gave way and he took his own life. 'At the very time when the savage wretches who raised a shout at his funeral were rejoicing at his death, he had been preparing to assert at Verona, as he had done at Laibach and Troppau, the independence of Great Britain and her non-accordance in the policy of the continental sovereigns against the efforts of human freedom.'¹

Castlereagh was a comparatively dumb statesman, or at least he was no orator. But his successor Canning had now only to take the above-mentioned instructions and send the Duke of Wellington to Verona armed with them. Being a splendid orator, and a selfish and jealous politician, Canning was able to pose in the eyes of posterity, and to a certain extent in the eyes of the less shrewd of his own contemporaries, as having been the man who first pulled away from the foreign despots and the Holy Alliance. The truth is that Britain was never a member of the Holy Alliance at all.

We shall see the sequel of these events later, and must now consider the course of affairs at home during these seven years, 1815-22. Three burning questions agitated the minds of politicians, finance, Catholic Emancipation, and the reform of the House of Commons. The first perhaps appeared at the time the most difficult of the three. Our whole financial system had been put together piecemeal when Great Britain was mainly an agricultural country with a population which could well be fed from its own fields; but this had not really been possible for the last forty years. Population had nearly doubled in that period, and, while Britain continued her efforts to be agriculturally self-supporting, she had become, during the War, both the manufactory and the general shop of the world. Now, at the

¹ Cf. also Alison, *Lives of Lord Castlereagh and Sir C. Stewart*, iii. 183, 301.

peace, her customers could go and trade where they pleased, and so her monopoly was lost. Those customers were also learning to manufacture things for themselves, and so there was a rapid fall in the demand for British goods. We were moreover burdened with a debt of 860 millions, and even the heaviest taxation that then seemed endurable could not meet the necessary annual expenditure. There was a forced paper currency which had, at its lowest, been depreciated some 12 per cent.: and one of the worst problems ahead was whether, and if so when, this paper money could again be made convertible, at the demand of its holders, into gold—in other words, whether cash payments could be restored. The result of all this, coupled with the inevitable variety of seasons and harvests, was a twofold trouble: first, a steady drop in the prices for which merchants could sell manufactured goods abroad; and, secondly, a fluctuation of prices, both of manufactures and of agricultural produce, so great as to make all contracts unsafe.

The Government began by two appalling mistakes: first, in order to protect the agricultural interest, they carried in 1815 a law that no corn should be imported from foreign countries until the price at home reached 80s. per quarter, nor from the Colonies till it reached 67s.; and secondly, in the following spring, they allowed a defeat in the Commons to compel them to drop the income-tax of 10 per cent.,¹ which had been Pitt's great discovery of 1797. They also abandoned a tax on malt, and the result was that the first Peace budget showed a deficit of ten millions which had to be made up by further borrowing.

If the Government was in financial trouble, the country was deep in worse economic trouble. Even before the bad harvest of 1816, which sent wheat up to 103s. per quarter, and a loaf of bread to eighteenpence, wages in the manufacturing districts were dropping alarmingly, looms were thrown idle, thousands of men were out of work: and multitudes of disbanded soldiers and sailors increased the

¹ Vansittart had proposed to retain it at 5 per cent.; it was Brougham who carried its complete abolition.

trouble. In the agricultural south, where the wages of labourers seldom reached ten shillings a week, farmers had to throw up their farms and labourers burnt ricks of corn, while in the midlands hand-loom weavers broke machinery which seemed to be taking the bread from their mouths. There was talk of a 'general strike'. The country banks, which had lent money to farmers in good years, were calling in their debts, or stopping payment. The poor-rates, out of which wages were constantly supplemented, until perhaps ten per cent. of the population were in receipt of relief, pressed most hardly on landowners, and especially on the fast-dwindling class of yeomen who still farmed their own land.

There was nothing very new in all this; some of it was the natural consequence of the 'Industrial Revolution',¹ which had been going on from the early years of George III, and had entirely dislocated English life; it had shifted wealth from country to town, from South to North, from agriculturist to manufacturer;² and as yet neither custom nor law had adapted itself to the change. We still, after the War, persisted in maintaining a high tariff against the importation of foreign goods, even when confronted with the fact that foreigners would no longer buy largely from us. Public opinion lagged behind brute fact, and law, as it always must and should, lagged behind public opinion. Thus there was neither custom, nor public opinion, nor law, to fight against the mania for cheap labour, and only slowly did the national conscience, already busy with the horrors

¹ Mr. Trevelyan uses the excellent epithet of 'unguided' for this Revolution. The Government, nay the Country, 'could organize itself for no special purpose, and allowed its millions to become the economic prey of blind forces.' (*Lord Grey*, 119.)

² In 1801 there were 152 persons per square mile in England and Wales; in 1901 there were 558. The total population was nearly quadrupled during the nineteenth century. The proportion of those living in towns to those in the country was not given in the Census returns till 1851, and it was then almost exactly equal. In 1901 75 per cent. of the total lived in towns. (Porter, *Progress of the Nation*, ed. 1912, cap. I.)

of West Indian Slavery (having abolished the actual Slave Trade in 1807), awake to the far greater horrors of allowing women to work in mines, and children of six to be bound apprentices to chimney-sweeping, or to work for unlimited hours in the factories. The poor-law authorities actually collected such children in batches and sent them off to distant places to be so bound. It took a whole series of Factory Acts¹ to eradicate these evils. The worst of it was that the 'orthodox' political economists of those days, like McCulloch and the Dutch Jew, David Ricardo, from whom Peel professed to have learnt as much as Pitt had learned from Adam Smith, treated this state of things as if it was part of the law of nature. Labour, of any age or sex, was to them a 'commodity' to be bought in the cheapest market in order to make goods which its buyers might sell in the dearest. There was no doubt about the material wealth that had been created for the country by obedience to their doctrines. During the War our exports had increased by nearly 300 per cent.; our capital had been quintupled, and the greatest advances of all had been made in the new cotton and the comparatively new iron manufactures: the far older woollen had vastly increased too, but not in such proportions as these.² New inventions had constantly come to simplify and to expedite the processes. Steam was in full blast in all of them, and steam was just beginning to be harnessed to transport as well as to manufacture. And steam depended wholly on coal; it was the most grimy of all

¹ The first Factory Act, 1802, was the work of the elder Sir Robert Peel (the father of the statesman), who himself employed 15,000 hands. By it children were not to be allowed to work *more than twelve hours* a day! Night-work was forbidden, and inspectors of factories were appointed. There was no other serious restriction till 1833.

² Not till about 1825 did wool begin to come in serious quantities from Australia, but we already imported largely from North Germany. All the raw material of the cotton trade had to be imported, from India, from Turkey, and, more and more each year, from the Southern States of North America, where it was wholly grown by slave-labour.

revolutions. Such wealth as this had been purchased at far too high a price of human suffering:

Dank and foul, dank and foul
 By the smoky town in its murky cowl,
 Foul and dank, foul and dank,
 By wharf and sewer and slimy bank;
 Darker and darker the further I go;
 Baser and baser the richer I grow;
 Who dare sport with the sin-defiled?
 Shrink from me, turn from me, mother and child.¹

If ever that other industrial revolution, which Science is so constantly promising us, shall substitute electricity for steam we shall at least get rid of the 'black country'. Railways had not yet begun to deface the landscape, and heavy goods were still carried by sea or river; there was also a beautiful network of canals ²—*ostendent terris haec tantum fata*—in process of construction. The high roads were in their glory, the stage-coaches, and the post-chaises; but cruelty to horses was, one fears, very great.

Now it was not unnatural that thinking men among the factory 'hands' should seek a political, rather than an economic, remedy for these evils. We had always been a politically-minded people; even the Saxons seem to have been in the habit of settling their disputes by votes; even the most uneducated (and few hand-workers had in 1815 any education but what they had given themselves) could see that the British Parliament, not the King or his ministers, was the real Instrument of Government. The whole story of the French Revolution was ringing in their ears—a revolution born in revolt, and carried through by a series of still fiercer revolts, and one which had brought unquestionable benefit to the mass of the French people. They did not

¹ Kingsley was thinking of a north-country river.

² It was the inability of the canals to carry the increasing traffic that made Manchester and Liverpool think of a railway; the Bill for it was carried in Parliament in 1826. By 1845 over 2,000 miles of railway were working in the United Kingdom: by 1907, 23,000 miles. (Porter, 551-4.)

realize that this benefit had in reality been the attainment of such 'common-law rights' as all Englishmen had possessed for centuries. They fixed their minds rather on the political rights which, won for a moment in 1789, had soon been lost again, and which few Frenchmen had cared, and fewer still had dared, to exercise during the Revolution. So the one cry of the 'oppressed' British people, in the fifteen years after Waterloo, was for political power, for votes, and for such a reform of the electoral machinery as would give everybody a vote. The system (or rather the absence of system) of our representation was ridiculous enough to make such a cry appear extremely reasonable. I have said something about it in my third volume and shall have more to say presently.

But it was also not unnatural that the Government—any Government, Whig or Tory, of those days would have acted much in the same way—should object to the methods employed by the would-be reformers, to the mass-meetings, marches, more or less secret drilling, tricolour cockades, and inflammatory language. If the demagogues were under the influence of the recent history of France, so was the Government, and the Government understood that history better than the demagogues did. Our statesmen, however, failed to realize that, while the Parisians had invented and perfected the 'art of insurrection', those few among the British people who desired anything of the kind were likely to prove themselves very clumsy copyists of the Parisians. Englishmen were going in time to perfect the art of political agitation without insurrection, which is a very different thing. The Government also held firmly to the reasonable notion that political power should rest upon the possession of property, and should be in the hands only of those who have 'a stake in the country'. Holding this doctrine they were quite right in trying to prevent pressure from being brought to bear upon Parliament from beneath or from outside.

Every mass-meeting (and much more inflammatory language than would be allowed to-day was used at many of these) seemed to represent an attempt at such pressure.

'The French Revolution began in inflammatory mass-meetings in defiance of the law, and successive French Governments were wrecked because they yielded to the demands of these; let us therefore beware of yielding.' But it was a grave mistake to indict the orators at such meetings for 'high treason'. The unsystematized Common Law was unfortunate in knowing no lesser crime to fit the circumstances; for a 'riot' is not a riot till damage is effected, a 'rout' is not a rout till it can be proved that some one has incited to such damage, and an 'unlawful assembly' is—well, difficult to define but susceptible of any amount of argument; more than twelve persons assembled and crying *Boo!* may quite arguably become an unlawful assembly.

Thus the meeting in Spa Fields, London, in November 1816, was really a riot because a gunsmith's shop was plundered. Yet there was more behind that meeting than the ostensible design of a petition for parliamentary reform. Serious Committees, even of the most Tory Houses of Lords and Commons, are not apt to find mere mares'-nests, and in 1817 Committees of both Houses found that there was a (very absurd and clumsy) conspiracy on foot to subvert the Constitution; seditious pamphlets were being distributed, unlawful oaths were being administered, and attempts were being made to seduce the troops. It was a thousand pities that there was till 1829 no regular police, either in London or in the provinces, and that in the last resort the Government could rely only, as in the Wilkes and Gordon riots of the previous century, on soldiers to quell riots. The two storm centres were London and Lancashire.

The history of demagoguery is instructive. It is not often the men who make the speeches and inflame the mob that are the real movers; and if these do obtain control, they soon find themselves pushed off the *rostrum* by demagogues more violent than themselves. In sober England the more violent generally end by disgusting their audiences, and then comes apathy or reaction. So it was with the early Radicals of the years before us, so with the Chartists of 1839-48, and so

it is with the agitators of to-day. So it was in the French Revolution. Even in ancient Athens Cleon probably had 'lesser fleas upon his back to bite him', as well as the sausage-man, if we only knew their names.

Three or four of the leading demagogues of our period, then, call for some notice. The frothiest and most futile was Henry Hunt, 'Orator Hunt', a Wiltshire farmer's son of some education, now in middle life, but the most quarrelsome creature imaginable, and eaten up with vanity—his great years were from 1816 to 1822. He was none too brave, and was apt to turn up late at meetings if he suspected there would be opposition. He quarrelled with every one of his own party in turn, and had in fact no qualifications for leadership except a commanding presence, a stentorian voice, and an extraordinarily abusive tongue. Far more dangerous, because far abler, was the London master-tailor Francis Place. He knew nothing of the North of England and had never been inside a factory in his life, but he had known what it was to be out of work in London in his youth; now he had become rich and had set up a fine shop in Charing Cross. Here he made breeches for the aristocracy, was civil to them to their faces and sneered at them behind their backs. But he was the more dangerous because he was independent, and quite indifferent to popularity. He had no belief in his own class, 'the vulgarity' as he called it, but he worked steadily for what he conceived to be its advantage. He became intimate with Bentham and the elder Mill, and was much consulted by extreme Radical members of Parliament, such as Hume and Hobhouse. Content to be the power behind the throne of *Demos*, he began his career as a wire-puller at the Westminster election of 1807, and developed into the first great caucus-leader¹ in English History. What he wanted was a Republic and a single chamber. He hated Brougham, Burdett, Cartwright, Cobbett, and Hunt almost equally; he hated the Whigs worse than he hated the Tories, and he hated Lord Grey

¹ The word is actually used by him in 1831.

worst of all. He was a cold cynical hater, a cold cynical man. He was quite unscrupulous too in his methods; any stick, even Queen Caroline (though in private he avowed that he thought her disgusting and guilty), was good enough wherewith to beat any Government. That which makes him most odious is that he had no illusions.¹ But he was brave, prudent, and strong; when he took up a cause it was apt to triumph in the end. He could go into the gallery of the House and 'coach' his members with his eye during a debate, and he treated them as naughty school-boys if they disobeyed him. He could 'tune' the Radical newspapers. He did much to create a public opinion against the Combination Laws (which were supposed to make strikes illegal) and something to force the Reform Bill through Parliament.

A more questionable but more attractive figure was William Cobbett, farmer, journalist, and ex-sergeant-major in a line regiment. He also was a quarrelsome dog, and his first journalistic *nom de plume*, 'Peter Porcupine', fitted him admirably; his quills were for ever erect and exceedingly sharp. Cobbett's *Political Register* was a weekly paper from 1802 till his death in 1835; from 1816 till 1819, when it fell under the new stamp-duty, it was sold for twopence. It was read by every one² who could read. Cobbett was a master of vigorous homely English, and his *Rural Rides*, the work of his later life, is a classic. He was several times prosecuted for sedition, but was quite ready to skip across to America, where his libellous habits had got him into trouble as far back as 1797. Though he cared little for Parliamentary Reform he got a seat in the first reformed Parliament, by which time his force was spent.³ His sturdiness was fully

¹ Having had fourteen children of his own he naturally became a warm supporter of the doctrines of the Rev. Mr. Malthus, or Malthouse, whose *Essay on Population*, published in 1798, had been the subject of such fierce controversy.

² 'Oh', said Lord Stowell [the great lawyer, brother of Lord Eldon], 'my brother and I could not do without Cobbett; we read him to know how the country is going on.' (Broughton, *Recollections of a Long Life*, iii. 183.)

³ Cobbett had some strange ideas. He wanted to repudiate the

as great as that of his enemy Place, his prejudices and his vanity far greater; also his own party, if indeed he ever had a party, trusted him far less.

A totally different and wholly lovable person was the 'old Major'. John Cartwright, of an ancient family of landowners, had fought under Hawke at Quiberon and had been a favourite officer of Lord Howe. He never lost his commission in the Navy,¹ but, as he declined in 1777 to serve in the American War, he was never again employed afloat, and his title of Major comes from the Notts Militia which he had helped to raise. His first Radical pamphlets dated back to the American War, when he corresponded with some of the leading Foxite Whigs. He clung all his life to his 'few simple principles'—universal suffrage, ballot, equal electoral districts, annual parliaments, but he was no republican and believed in the old constitution of King, Lords, and Commons. Had it not been for his wide knowledge of all kinds of life—he was inventor, architect, engineer, as well as soldier and sailor—one would have called him a doctrinaire. He was deeply religious, and his special bugbears were the writings of Place's favourite, Tom Paine. His religion was practical and beneficent. Wilberforce meets him in the street, and, with a saintly snuffle, 'hopes we shall meet in a better world'; the stout Major replies, 'I hope we shall first mend the world we are in'. He hated standing armies, but advocated universal service for the defence of the country. He was red-hot for the liberation of Spain in 1808 and in 1820, of the Spanish Colonies in 1818, of Greece in 1821, and he corresponded with the liberators in all. He was several times proposed as a candidate for Parliament, but was far too outspoken to be acceptable to any caucus, patron, or constituency. He began at the age of 70 to go on tours in

National Debt; it was from him perhaps that Peacock derived his humorous hatred of paper money. He was also the first Englishman to raise the cries of 'back to the land', and 'land and labour on land are the sources of all wealth'.

¹ He was promoted Commander as late as 1810, being then 70 years of age.

order to get up petitions for Reform, and in 1816 Canning called him the 'old heart in London from which the veins of sedition in the country are supplied'. In 1819 he was indicted for conspiracy and fined £100, which he paid in court in gold, taking the coins out of a canvas bag from his capacious pocket. But, above all, his great merit was that he was for ever against insurrection, against all employment of physical force. He died in 1824, cheery and staunch to the last.

Cartwright's greatest admirer, and perhaps the most interesting, certainly the most disinterested, of all the reformers, also lived to be eighty-four. Samuel Bamford, silk-weaver of Middleton near Manchester, was born in 1788 and died in 1872. He was of old yeoman stock, once wealthy, which had come down in the world: he remembered his grandfather, a ranting humorous Jacobite, who had only escaped hanging in 1746 by feigning madness: 'the rebel blood got the ascendancy', says Sam, 'I was born a Radical'. He was born a true poet¹ and a dreamer of noble dreams also. Many people know his *Passages in the Life of a Radical*, but fewer have read his *Early Days*, when Irk and Irwell were still brawling moorland streams, when Babylon Brow and Tonge Wood were still fairy- and goblin-haunted, when ale was strong and no one ashamed to take his whack of it, and village dances and wakes still flourished. Sam never in his wildest young days (they were fairly wild) lost religion, but he wanted 'less of priestianity and more of Christ's own Christianity', less of creeds and dogmas and more of 'the living faith which bringeth forth works'. He had soaked himself in Milton, Shakespeare, Pope's *Iliad*, and Burns, but his interest in politics began with a chance perusal of Cobbett's *Register* about 1808. He saw without approval the Luddite (frame-breaking) riots reach Lancashire in 1812, and saw the Militia and the Scots Greys clear the streets of Middleton at the expense of four lives.

His better known book, published in 1844, covers only the

¹ This does not mean that he could *write* poetry; he was singularly unsuccessful at that job.

five years 1816-21: and nothing else gives such a clear picture of those years. Some of the speakers at the Spa Fields riot were arrested, though not brought to trial (for high treason) till June 1817; when the first of them, Watson, was acquitted by the jury, the others, among whom was the afterwards notorious Thistlewood, were released. 'Hampden Clubs' were being established everywhere (Cartwright's invention, 1811); these held weekly readings and discussions; Lancashire sent out missionaries to establish them in Yorkshire, which as yet had shown small sympathy with the cause of reform; soon there were many 'Village Hampdens'. 'We concentrated our energies', says Bamford, 'on universal suffrage and annual Parliaments, and did not press for the ballot.' He went to London, as delegate for Middleton, to a meeting of the London Hampden Club, of which Burdett was chairman; here he first saw Hunt, 'always beating against a tempest of his own creation'. There was nothing secret about the Hampdens, but Government could hardly be blamed if it recalled the affiliation of Jacobin Clubs which had extended the Reign of Terror over France. Bamford also saw then that 'grand old fellow' Major Cartwright, and Cobbett, 'dressed and posing as a gentleman-farmer'. He thought Burdett stiff and patronizing, but Lord Cochrane, who was on the eve of going off to his South-American venture, perfectly charming. He heard Brougham speak in Parliament and 'rail equally at Government and at us' (the Radicals). His opinion of the London Club was poor; 'there was much porter and tobacco but little sense'.

In 1817, under the influence of the reports of Committees of both Houses, the Habeas Corpus Act was suspended; the Home Secretary sent a circular to the Lords-Lieutenant ordering the arrest of the publishers of seditious pamphlets; and an Act was passed requiring licences to be obtained from magistrates for the holding of meetings or debates. The Grenville Whigs supported the Government in all these measures. It was going to be a somewhat better year both for prices and wages than 1816. Waterloo Bridge and the

Dulwich Gallery were both opened in 1817; the Trustees of the British Museum were considering where to store the Elgin Marbles, and how to unroll the half-burned papyri recently brought from Herculaneum. Voluntary economies in public finance were proposed and agreed to, the Regent and the Ministry giving up ten per cent. of their salaries, and several sinecures were abolished. The Regent was, however, insulted by the mob on his way to open Parliament, and riots and sedition continued in the North. In March a body of men started to march from Manchester to London each provided with a blanket (hence the name 'Blanketeers'); only six of the marchers, says Bamford, persevered as far as Ashbourne. The suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act drove many of the reformers into hiding, and Cobbett retired to America. 'Our meetings were infested by spies, and it was this, and the Suspension, which first led us to talk of using physical force; from that moment our power waned.' In March 1817 Bamford himself was arrested and examined before the Privy Council; he was home again in May. It was impossible to get convictions for treason—only one man, Brandreth, with two of his abettors, who had committed an atrocious murder in the course of a political agitation at Derby, was so convicted, and, when the Suspension was taken off in January 1818, only thirty-seven persons remained untried and were at once discharged.

In 1818 trade was really improving, which took much of the sting out of politics. Every one was hastening to take advantage of the new Savings-banks which had just been established. Finance was also improving; we were able to bribe Spain with the sum of £400,000, to put down the slave-trade, and a million was voted towards the building of new churches in populous districts. Parliament, which had been elected in 1812, was dissolved in June, and Government lost a few seats to the Whigs. Romilly replaced Cochrane as Burdett's companion at Westminster; when Romilly had committed suicide, a moderate Whig, George Lamb, defeated Place's candidate Hobhouse¹ (Byron's friend, after-

¹ 'Hobhouse and Burdett' (Radicals enough, one would think)

wards Lord Broughton), who was soon committed to Newgate for a pamphlet on the 'State of the Nation'. At the next election, 1820, Hobhouse beat Lamb.

Yet the agitation was soon renewed in Lancashire. Bamford confesses that he once received the confidence of some one who had an inkling either of Thistlewood's later plan, or at least of *a* plan, to murder the Ministers; he utterly refused to have anything to do with it, but felt he could not betray the creature. 'Private meetings for highly criminal purposes recommenced', and spies were prompting them. Female unions were being formed to promote reform; Samuel, from a sort of native chivalry, was a great champion of women's privileges. In 1818 he wrote the *Lancashire Hymn*, full of allusions to 'Hampden and Sidney'. Dr. Johnson had known that Algernon Sidney had been in the pay of the French Government, though it never became matter of common knowledge, and Sidney's name was always one to conjure with. What would he or Mr. Hampden have said to universal suffrage! Bamford's hymn ends with the lines—

If England wills the glorious deed,
We'll have another Runnimeade (*sic*),

but he says that the speakers at his meetings loved the sound of their own voices so much that they wouldn't waste time in singing. There were monster meetings in Birmingham and Leeds, and Birmingham hit on the strange device of electing two 'legislatorial attornies'.¹ Cartwright had suggested the bolder step of electing members of Parliament at once and sending them to Westminster to claim seats.

Early in 1819 Hunt arrived at Manchester and began to organize meetings for the same object, and there was drilling in the neighbouring towns and villages. 'The object

'are reviled and insulted every day by Hunt and Gale Jones.' (Colchester, Feb. 20, 1819.)

¹ There were also proposals, both in Birmingham and Manchester, for the purchase of a pocket-borough, whose members should then give voice to the views of these cities—a sort of vicarious representation.

of this', says Bamford, 'was merely to enable us to march to the field in good order'; for they were to hold on August 16th such a monster meeting as had never been seen. All the summer evenings and on Sundays these drills went on and 'had an excellent effect on our sedentary weavers'. 'We clapped our hands at the "stand-at-ease" and it was *called* "firing".' There were extravagant acts and speeches, which had better have been left alone. But they had 'no weapons except a few walking-staves, and Hunt wanted us to leave even these behind, urging that, if violence should be offered to us, we should not retaliate'. This went against Samuel's old-rebel blood, and he was for cudgels and self-defence, though he admitted afterwards that Hunt had been right there. On their banners were the words 'Unity and Strength', 'Liberty and Fraternity', 'Equal Representation or Death' (whose death?), 'Parliaments Annual', 'No Corn-Laws', 'Election by Ballot'. When they marched to the field by St. Peter's Church, then on the outskirts of Manchester,¹ on the appointed day 'we expected to be stopped on the road but were not'. There was a wide unbuilt space and a hustings decorated with flags. 'Our numbers were about 80,000' (this may safely be divided by two at least), and Hunt, who drove up in a barouche, was amazed at them. As far back as July 1st the Lancashire magistrates had been frightened at the drilling; they then wrote to the Home Secretary that some alarming insurrection was in contemplation, but admitted that, as the law stood, they could not interfere with peaceable meetings. And they added that 'local distress was serious' (1819 was not nearly such a 'good' year for trade as 1818), 'and so no wonder that the public gave ear to doctrines which promised them redress'. Special constables were therefore sworn in, Lancashire and Cheshire Yeomanry were called out, and one troop of regular cavalry (15th Hussars) was sent to the town.

No one knows how, when, or why the order to employ these troops was given. No authentic report of any of the speeches made on the hustings remains, but it looks as if

¹ Now the site of the 'Free Trade Hall'.

the magistrates, getting more and more alarmed at the numbers of the meeting, lost their heads and ordered the arrest of the orators. Our best witness, Bamford, was on the edge of the crowd and could hear nothing; he and some friends were just going off to get a drink when he saw a party of cavalry in blue and white uniform trotting on to the field; then he saw these men ‘fall on the people with their sabres’. These were yeomanry; he is sure that the Hussars never used their swords at all, and thinks they wouldn’t. In a moment, as it seemed, Hunt and the other speakers had disappeared and the soldiers were at the hustings cutting down the flag-staves. The whole crowd fled, and in ten minutes the field was empty but for a few dead and wounded (but ‘eighty thousand people’ don’t get quit of a field in ten minutes). Hunt was arrested after the crowd had fled. Some Yeomanry were injured by stones thrown by the crowd. No trustworthy figures of the casualties are forthcoming; the highest modern estimate, that of Mr. Wallas in the *Life of Place*, is ‘eleven killed and four or five hundred wounded’, and this is probably a great exaggeration.¹ There is also evidence that none of the soldiers used the edge of their sabres at all, but only the flat; even this may produce serious bruises, wounds, and perhaps death to infirm people, and it is quite likely that some were trampled to death by the horses or by the crowd. Of Bamford’s Middleton friends eleven men and five women were bruised or wounded, and one of the men afterwards died.

Bamford went in disguise into Manchester next day, and gathered that the authorities were stunned by what they had done, and much blamed by their own class, while ‘our people were athirst for revenge’. That evening he found his friends grinding scythes and hatchets, and he was himself for instant insurrection—‘now or never’. Yet ‘we had no plans and no one seemed able to form one’. He was arrested

¹ Mr. Temperley’s, in *Cambridge Modern History* (x. 581), is ‘one killed and some forty wounded or otherwise injured’. By Ebenezer Elliott’s time ‘Peterloo’ had become a tradition and ‘a legend of horror and massacre’.

on August 26th; with Hunt and several others he was committed for trial on a charge of conspiracy, but soon bailed. The Government at first thanked the magistrates and the troops; but some of their best supporters, both in and out of Parliament, soon felt this to have been an error. The Common Council of the City of London voted that the action of the magistrates had been 'disgraceful', and a large meeting of Yorkshire gentry, under their Whig Lord-Lieutenant, said the same thing. Of Lord Colchester's correspondents, Mr. Bankes said 'unfortunate, perhaps injudicious': Mr. Leycester, on the other hand, has heard of 'fifty white hats¹ sent to be dyed black', and that Sir Charles Wolseley, the 'legislatorial attorney' for Birmingham, has been hissed and pelted out of Warrington: old Mr. Hatsell, the learned author of *Hatsell's Precedents*, once Clerk of the House of Commons, hears that there is to be a simultaneous insurrection on November 15th: while Lord Redesdale interrupts his work on that stupendous monument of historical learning, the *Report on the Dignity of a Peer*, to express a wish that actual rebellion *should* break out; for 'smothered rebellion lurks long under the ashes'. But the main result was the immediate passing of the famous 'Six Acts', of which Lords Sidmouth and Eldon generally get the credit. The first of these prohibited unauthorized drill, the second assured speedy trials for all persons indicted for misdemeanours, the third allowed magistrates to issue warrants to search for concealed arms, the fourth strengthened the law against libels, the fifth still further restricted the right of public meetings, and the sixth extended the stamp-duty of fourpence, hitherto confined to newspapers, to pamphlets also. The really important one was the fifth: people were not to hold meetings outside their own parishes for the discussion of political grievances without the warrant of magistrates; the whole population of A. was not to march

¹ The white hat was your only true Radical wear—said to have been copied from Mr. Hunt's headgear. Lord Grey (Trevelyan, 194) speaks of the cheers which greeted his own white hat at the time of the Queen's trial.

to B. at the tail of some itinerant orator. Grenville and his friends again supported the Government. So Lord Byron, who is 'returning home immediately, hoping to find this Kingdom on the brink of a revolution', will be disappointed. Never mind, he is bringing with him the first two cantos of an 'amusing burlesque poem, loosely written in every sense of the word, called *Don Juan*'.¹

The old king died at last in January 1820, and George IV nearly died of excitement on becoming king. Next month happened the celebrated Cato Street conspiracy. Whether the 'street off the Edgware Road', where the conspirators were run to earth, was called after Cato the Censor, Cato of Utica, or some lesser member of the Porcian *gens*, does not appear, but there must have been some classical flavour about the grimy neighbourhood, as it now bears the name of Homer Street. The objects of the conspirators were simple: to murder the Ministers (who were to meet at dinner at Lord Harrowby's house in Grosvenor Square); to seize the Bank, the Tower, and some guns; and, generally, to 'make an explosion'. What was to follow the explosion does not seem clear, but they had prepared bags in which to put the heads of Sidmouth and Castlereagh. Obviously they were thinking of some of the worst scenes in the French Revolution, in which the leader, Thistlewood, once a deserter from the army, had graduated in 1794. They were betrayed by one of their own conspirators, and the five leaders were hanged, and beheaded after death. A couple of months later a spluttering little revolt broke out in Glasgow, and some of the rioters, who really had arms and used them, were overtaken by the Yeomanry at Bonnymuir on the Falkirk road; a score of them were taken prisoners but only two were executed. There had been a proposal for a 'general strike' in Glasgow, for the feature so familiar to us, of threats by the strikers against honest people who were going to their work, was then first manifested.

Parliament was dissolved in March, for, until the Act of 30 and 31 Victoria (1867), it had to be dissolved within six

¹ Colchester, Dec. 17, 1819.

months of the death of the Sovereign. There were rumours of a change of Ministry, and the Whigs were all a-hum;¹ there was a 'flirtation' between Tierney, the official leader of the Opposition in the Commons, and the King, but Lord Grenville was all against taking office. The King's great desire seemed to be to hide himself from his people; homely old George III, as long as his reason lasted, had delighted to walk and ride about among his people, not in the least from parade, rather because he liked to see jolly faces and to be seen; when George IV took the air in his carriage he sent on a groom to clear the roads of sightseers. 'Popular imagination regarded him almost as a Tiberius who had found a Capreae in his cottage in Windsor Park,'² nor has he been fortunate enough to find, as Tiberius has found, an historian to whitewash him. He loved lying in bed, and lay there half the day designing dresses for his coronation.³ 'There can be no kernel in this light nut; the soul of this man is his clothes.'⁴

It is characteristic of our people that in 1820 the Queen's 'trial' killed all other political excitement. It was a sordid business. Ever since his daughter's death in 1817 George had been scheming how to rid himself of his wife, and he now ordered his trembling archbishop (Howley) to omit her name from the prayers for the Royal Family. She had been abroad in queer company since 1814. There had been inquiries into her conduct even before she left England. In 1818-19 another commission of inquiry took evidence in Italy, and reported unfavourably. There were two questions at issue: (i) could she be divorced? (ii) could she be indicted for high treason? By the Statute of Edward III it was high treason to commit adultery with the Queen, but could this apply to her alleged paramour (who was not a British subject) or to herself? Now it was absurd for a man who had

¹ As bees on flowers alighting cease to hum
So settling upon places Whigs grow dumb.

Thomas Moore.

² Lewis, *Administrations of Great Britain*, 421.

³ Lewis, 407.

⁴ *All's well that ends well*, ii. 5.

led, and was leading, such an immoral life as George IV to expect a divorce, though he characteristically threatened to dismiss his ministers unless they would procure him one. Many Whigs, however, had supported Caroline's cause at one time or another, and Brougham now took it up in earnest, when she protested against the omission of her name from the Liturgy. The Radicals yelled in on the same side—anything to badger the Ministry—and the Queen, who showed plenty of courage, arrived early in June. 'Her conduct and his (the King's) conduct made it equally difficult for Ministers to remain motionless or to move.'¹ Until she came they had refused to proceed against her; they had offered her £50,000 a year to stay abroad for ever (she already enjoyed £35,000). Even Brougham wished her to accept this; did he believe her innocent?² Directly she came the mob shouted for joy and acclaimed her wherever she went. There were alehouses at which soldiers were given free drinks if they would pledge her health. When there were symptoms of mutiny in one of the Guards' regiments, and it was sent off to Portsmouth, the mob shouted to it to 'stand for the Queen'.

On the Queen's arrival in London she stayed with her former linendraper in South Audley Street. In July Lord Liverpool was obliged to move for a Bill to 'deprive Caroline of the title of Queen and to dissolve the marriage'. The second reading of this Bill was her real 'trial';³ it dragged on from August to October and was carried by twenty-eight votes, the third reading only by eleven. So the Bill was quietly dropped without being sent to the Commons at all. Obviously many peers voted against it who yet believed her guilty.⁴ It looks, in fact, as if every unprejudiced person

¹ Lewis, 407.

² See Atlay, *Victorian Chancellors*, i. 233 sqq. At least Mrs. Brougham carefully avoided calling upon her.

³ Eldon 'little expected in 1820, when he was presiding at Queen Caroline's trial, that he should live to see her Attorney-General on the Woolsack, and her Solicitor-General Chief Justice of England' (so Greville, iv. 50, on Lord Eldon's death in 1838).

⁴ One hundred and sixty peers absented themselves at the third reading.

believed her guilty. But the expediency of dropping the Bill was unquestionable, and prudent people congratulated each other. The mob, on the other hand, howled with delight, and the Queen went to St. Paul's to return thanks. Who wrote the immortal epigram¹ is not known; it was sent on November 15 to Lord Colchester, who was abroad, by his blind friend Francis Burton. The Queen did not obey the advice given in it, but accepted a now unconditional £50,000 a year and lived in shady company at Hammersmith till August 1821, when she died suddenly. Her popularity vanished long before her death, and when, in July 1821, she tried to force her way into the Abbey at the Coronation, the mob only jeered at her. Such is *Demos*. But there was a splendid riot at her funeral procession. Canning's attitude had been curious; he had been an acquaintance (he said 'a friend') of the Princess of Wales, when he was out of office, before she went abroad, and on the strength of that he ostentatiously stood aloof from all proceedings against her, yet he did not resign till the 'trial' was over, and did resign then. *Quaere*, did he think of himself as a wise rat leaving a sinking Ministry-ship? The King blustered and talked big against his 'servants', and renewed his 'flirtation' with the Whigs, but was not serious in doing so.

Before leaving the year 1820 let me return for a moment to my friend Bamford. He was tried, with Hunt and some others, at York in the spring, and the judge expressly charged the jury that a meeting for considering Parliamentary Reform was not, in August 1819, illegal. In the teeth of this charge, the jury found him guilty, and he was bound over to come up for judgement in London in May. He walked thither (and the account of his walk is a fascinating travel-record, with many a humorous digression), yet before the court he spoilt his case by avowing that 'never again would he advise his countrymen to exercise that

¹ Most Gracious Queen, we thee implore
To go away and sin no more,
But if that effort be too great,
To go away at any rate.

degree of patience that he there (viz. at Manchester) did advise, until every drop of blood then shed had been accounted for'. So he was condemned to a year's imprisonment in Lincoln jail, where he was well treated, his wife being allowed to bear him company for part of the time. Hunt got two years in Ilchester jail, and did nothing but rail and wail at his misery there. Small thanks did Samuel ever receive for his services to the cause of Reform, rather continual slanders from other leaders of that cause; because he had usually (not always) counselled moderation he was called a Government spy. When he published his book in 1844 he had a kind letter about it from Lord Abinger, who, as Mr. Scarlett, had prosecuted him at York in 1820. He remained an ardent Radical in sentiment till the end of his long life, but would have nothing to do with Chartism, or with any 'physical force' movements. He saw clearly that the two needs of his class were education and moral reform (*μετάνοια*—a change of heart). Also he abandoned 'annual parliaments',¹ proposing instead that Parliament should be perpetual, but that members should come before their constituents, to give an account of themselves, every year, and be dismissed if they do not satisfy these persons!

The year 1821 was to see a decided improvement, except to the agriculturists, on anything since Waterloo, and the improvement in trade continued steady until 1825. The leading agitators were in jail, and looms were at work and earning better wages. Farmers, however, had been very hard hit by bad weather in the autumn of 1820. Yet the price of bread fell steadily throughout 1821, and in December corn was down to 48s. per quarter. Government suffered from a sort of revolt of its best supporters, the agriculturists (who even began to clamour for a partial repudiation of the

¹ Swift, writing to Pope in 1721, said 'As to Parliaments I adored the wisdom of that Gothick institution which made them annual . . . for who sees not that, while such assemblies are permitted to have a longer duration, there grows up a commerce of corruption between the Ministry and the deputies?' (Swift, *Works*, ed. 1784, vol. xiv, p. 26. Quoted in *Life and Correspondence of Major Cartwright*, i. 82, by Miss F. D. Cartwright.)

National Debt), because it could do nothing to help them. Real economies were effected in many directions; Joseph Hume, one of those patient useful bores who make motions session after session till they get at least a little bit of opinion in their favour, had been in Parliament since 1812, and it was in 1820 that he began his annual attack on little extravagances; and, though Bobus Smith called him and Vansittart (the inadequate Chancellor of the Exchequer) 'Pennywise and Poundfoolish', Pennywise did a lot for His Majesty's revenue: 'retrench', 'retrench' was his watchword.

Of far greater effect was the return to cash payments which was completed in 1821. The first difficulty in the way of this had been the political disturbances in South America, whose colonists were in revolt against Spain: most of our gold and silver came from their mines, and the price of it naturally went up when their rebellions began; by 1817 this price was again falling, and the Bank of England was not averse from resuming cash payments in that year. Government, however, held its hand till 1819, when a Committee of the Commons sat on the question with young Robert Peel as Chairman. Peel began his work with an open mind, became a convert to resumption during that work, and carried his point; it was not to be done all at once, but by successive steps till 1823. In February 1820 the Bank was already dealing with ingots of gold, each worth £300, which got the name of 'Ricardos' (as we spoke in 1919 of a 'Bradbury' for a Treasury note). In April 1821 Mr. Bankes writes that 'the Bank is ready to discharge upon the public several millions of bright sovereigns which have lain for some time burning in their coffers',¹ and by May 1st the operation was complete, two years before the time-limit fixed by the Government. This said much for the financial soundness of the country. Early next year all State loans which had been raised at 5 were converted to 4 per cent., and more than a million a year was thereby saved. Yet to spend nearly £300,000 (mostly in clothes) on the Coronation was almost as wicked

¹ Colchester, April 9, 1821.

as it was ridiculous. This was wholly the King's doing; his most genuine passion was for clothes. But in other respects the ceremony was not a great success. The dinner was cold, the Champion was stiff and awkward, and Lord Howard of Effingham, as Earl Marshal, rode on a hired circus-horse, which, instead of backing, as he should have done, began to rear, and had to be pulled out of Westminster Hall by the tail.

Early in 1822 a change in the Government began; in the previous year Lord Londonderry's death had called his son Castlereagh to the Lords; Canning had already resigned (end of 1820), so Ministers were weaker than ever in the Commons; Lord Liverpool himself had been badly shaken by the loss of his wife. Therefore, an advance was made to Lord Grenville and his haughty, stupid brother, the Duke of Buckingham; and these, after some haggling, allowed some subordinates from among their friends to come in. 'Everything is falling in price', said Lord Lansdowne, 'except Grenvilles.' A far greater acquisition was Peel, who in January became Home Secretary *vice* Sidmouth—the latter retaining till 1824 a seat in the Cabinet without office. Peel was now to begin his great career of practical reforms. Lord Wellesley had just gone to Ireland as Lord-Lieutenant, though, as it proved, only to disappoint the hopes of the Catholics which had been pinned to him. The Marquis was, in truth, a queer fellow; among the greatest of Indian Governors, he was an unsatisfactory colleague for home-governments. In the group of men which hovered between the Whigs and the Tories we may now safely include the Grenvilles and Wellesley, and we shall soon be able to name some of them, after the new man of the hour, 'Canningites'.

If we could think of George Canning merely in the terms of the great causes which, as one of the political heirs of Pitt, he had supported and was to support—the War, Free-trade, Catholic Emancipation—or of the young statesmen who grew up under him, William Lamb, Palmerston, Dudley, Aberdeen, his would not be a difficult place in

history to fix, and it would be a high one. His political principles were right enough; it was his method of getting himself into a position to carry them out that was questionable. Impatience for self-advancement, want of loyalty to colleagues, these were the things of which he was accused by his contemporaries. Castlereagh was above hatred or resentment, and had found no difficulty, in spite of all that had happened in 1809, in working with Canning, 1816-20. Liverpool knew the value and the ability of his early college friend, and he too seems to have been utterly indifferent to the half-contemptuous way in which Canning sometimes treated him. But there were others less forgiving. And so when, after the Queen's death, Canning thought he would at once be asked to resume office he was disappointed. The splendid prize of the Government of India, which his own far nobler son Charles was one day to hold in a critical hour, was offered to him instead. For some time he would and he wouldn't. In March 1822 he had agreed to accept it, but at the end of that month he was still working for pro-Catholic measures in the Commons. Perhaps he knew how frail Liverpool was getting, and many people were soon to notice that.¹ All the summer Canning lingered, making preparations for going to India:

Now fitted the halter, now traversed the cart,
And often took leave but was loth to depart.

He was extremely sensitive to criticism, and criticism was not spared him. He was almost of the same age as his two great—rivals?—and his own health was not good. Yet he could have little reason to expect the headship of the Government while Castlereagh lived, and none to suppose that Castlereagh's end was near. For the latter's breakdown was quite sudden—a matter of a few days, or weeks at most. But when the catastrophe of August 12th deprived Britain of 'the Bayard of political chivalry, *sans peur et*

¹ 'Lord Liverpool, who for some months has always favoured one leg, now coils both legs on the bench where he sits, and is evidently in worse health.' (Colchester, June 4, 1824.)

sans reproche,¹ who but Canning could be Foreign Secretary? Liverpool had some difficulty in forcing the King to accept him, but people were getting to know that George IV could be forced to anything. 'Canning will be a bitter pill to them [the Cabinet], yet I think they will swallow it,' wrote Lord Dudley.² 'He assumed to himself even in the presence of Lord Liverpool the tone and authority of a premier.'³ No one knew exactly what he was after, and he very early began by 'hedging' on the Catholic question. By courting Lady Conyngham (the King's mistress) he soon won over the King. He could never win over the Duke of Wellington, who told Buckingham as early as May 1823 how much he disliked Canning. I do not think Peel can be accused of petty or personal jealousy; but he must have felt, we know that he did feel, himself to be Canning's natural rival, and a great deal of his later political life may have been influenced by this rivalry. Other Moderates, Whigs, even Radicals, thought there might be a chance for them in the new Ministry; even Brougham had hopes of becoming Attorney-General, but a furious quarrel with Canning, almost ending in a duel, soon put an end to these hopes.

¹ Buckingham, *Memoirs of the Court of George IV*, i. 357.

² *Letters to the Bishop of Llandaff*, 356.

³ Buckingham, i. 385.

CHAPTER II

CATHOLIC EMANCIPATION AND PARLIAMENTARY REFORM

A NEW period thus begins and must be continued until the passing of the Reform Bill. Robinson succeeded Vansittart at the Exchequer, and the extreme 'goodness' of 1822-3 was reflected in his first budget—a surplus of seven millions, reduction of debt and of taxes, a new and more reasonable 'sinking-fund', some steps towards Free-trade. Little of this was the work of 'Prosperity Robinson'; some of it perhaps was due to William Huskisson, who now became President of the Board of Trade. He too had sat at the feet of Pitt, and had been a close follower and friend of Canning. 'No man was so well versed in financial, commercial, and colonial matters.'¹ But no one quite trusted him; something of Canning's reputation for trickery clung to this friend of Canning. Melbourne, who had no prejudices, thought Huskisson 'nervous, ill-bred, and rather snobbish', yet delighted to pick his brains and leaned towards Free-trade from his teaching. Wilbraham 'hopes he will learn to look a man in the face when he speaks to him'.² In foreign affairs the new Foreign Secretary had it all his own way and a very fine way it was at first. As I said above he had only to take Castlereagh's instructions and to act upon them. But in acting upon them he emphasized them in public language which the dumb Castlereagh had been too reticent to employ. He 'played to the gallery'—or 'took the nation into his confidence'; you may call it which you please.

The Holy Alliance was on its last legs and Canning danced

¹ Greville, ii. 49.

² Colchester, Feb. 9, 1823.

it down gleefully, rudely. There were three burning questions when Wellington arrived as British representative at Verona in October 1822: (1) Are the Greek insurgents to be recognized as belligerents, or are they only rebels? (2) Are the rebellious Spanish Colonies (now almost free by their own acts) to be recognized as independent states? (3) Is France to be allowed, encouraged, or forbidden, to put down the insurrection against Ferdinand VII in Spain? The two latter questions were somewhat closely connected. Wellington, on his way to Verona, saw the French Minister and learned that France really did mean to interfere in Spain, but that she was as averse as was England from any joint European interference; 'it was a French question only.' Much as we disliked this French interference, Canning was not going to war with France to prevent it, though the stouter Whigs, of Grey's party, wished him to do so. The attitude of France at least enabled Wellington to stop any joint interference, and here, to the great disgust of Alexander, he was supported by Metternich. So in 1823 a French army went in, and had an unexpected 'walk over'. Ferdinand was restored to his full power, the Constitution of the insurgents was annulled, and some French bayonets were left to keep guard in Spain. It was indeed an inequitable business, and the worst of it was that it pulled France and Britain far apart; and in their united action had lain the best hope of resistance to the aims of the three autocratic Eastern Powers. That which complicated it still more was the natural, yet very tiresome, attitude of France towards the revolted Spanish Colonies.

Buenos Ayres—now the Argentine Republic—had practically been independent for the last fifteen years, and Mexico for not much less; their revolts had begun in a laudable desire not to be swallowed by Napoleon, and we had encouraged them. Our alliance with Spain during the Peninsular War had prevented us from continuing that encouragement after 1808, but did not stop our steadily increasing trade with them. By 1818 nearly all Central and Southern America had thrown off the Spanish yoke, and had

grouped itself into republics, most of which are still in existence. The sympathy of Britons with their liberation was not wholly disinterested, for we could not tolerate the Spanish claim to monopolize their trade. In 1818 Spain, which had recently sold Florida to the United States, managed to purchase a few old ships and talked big about an expedition to subdue her rebels; the difficulty was to persuade her soldiers to embark on those ships. But something like a fleet was got together and was preparing for an attack on Valparaiso when Lord Cochrane arrived in South America. This gallant but insubordinate British sailor and Radical was the very man for naval guerrilla warfare; the Republic of Chile had appointed him its Admiral in 1817, and he proceeded to create a Chilian Navy, his flagship being a captured Spanish frigate, re-christened the *O'Higgins*. The British Government naturally did not want its hands to be forced, and passed, without enthusiasm, a 'Foreign Enlistment Act', to prevent its subjects going to fight in foreign armies, and to prevent British ships being equipped for such services. In spite of this volunteers did go and serve the Spanish colonists; Cochrane's 'Chilian Navy' largely consisted of old British ships, and, though it had only two startling successes (the capture of Valdivia in 1819, and of the Spanish frigate *Esmeralda* off Callao in 1820), these were enough to turn the tide; the Spanish Navy was powerless, and Chile and Peru were freed. It is needless to say that these noble republicans treated Cochrane with the basest ingratitude, and that he never got a farthing of his prize-money or of rent from the large estate which they had voted him. He left the Chilian service in 1823, and went successively to help Brazil to throw off the yoke of Portugal, and Greece to throw off the yoke of Turkey, all his gallantry only ending in his own financial ruin.

In 1821 Spain still possessed a few ports in her revolted Colonies, and her ships constantly interrupted our trade with them. Even after the (1820) revolt of Spain against her own king, Castlereagh had remonstrated against this interruption; Canning went farther and gave instructions that such

Spanish ships should be treated as pirates. He sounded the United States (which were suffering from similar interference with their trade) on the question of joint action, but was rebuffed.

The real danger was that France might offer to help Spain to subdue her Colonies. This both Castlereagh and Canning successively were determined to prevent at all costs, and this Wellington was able to veto at the Congress of Verona, though he was unable to restrain the three Eastern Powers from voting France their 'moral' support in her coming crusade against the Spanish Constitutionals. Directly France had gained her unexpected (1823) success in Spain, she proposed that the question of the Colonies should be referred to a European Congress, but this was mere bluster, and came to nothing. At the end of 1823 President Monroe issued his celebrated message to the American Congress, promulgating the 'Monroe doctrine' that the United States would tolerate the intervention of no European Power on any part of the American Continent. He recognized the new States as independent, and Canning had already taken a practical step in the same direction by appointing Consuls to some of them. Our official recognition of them—Colombia, Buenos Ayres, and Mexico, first—was deferred till the beginning of 1825. Buckingham,¹ whose friends didn't like the recognition, had long foreseen its necessity: 'If Buenos Ayres were to-morrow to impose duties on the ships and produce of every country except that which has recognized it,² you would be compelled to recognize it in six months.' Canning's bombastic phrase that he 'had called the New World into existence to redress the balance of the Old' could and did make the tour of both these worlds, but Castlereagh had prepared the way and would probably have done it, had he lived, at an earlier date than Canning. Indeed 'the nature of things' had prepared the way, the recognition was inevitable. Darwin, who visited these countries in the early thirties, regretted the disappear-

¹ *Memoirs*, ii. 145.

² U.S.A.

ance of the old Spanish Government,¹ and speaks of the frightful anarchy, especially in Peru, of the depraved drunken people, of the utter neglect of public works, which the old Government had maintained, of the revolutions without pretext, of the universal corruption of all the republican authorities, and of the cruel treatment of the Indians. Indeed most of the States of Central and South America have been standing scarecrows to all admirers of democracy ever since. But that is not our business.

Canning was delighted to think that he had fluttered the dovescotes of the European diplomats and frightened his own colleagues. Sidmouth resigned in 1824; Wellington was more and more alienated from Canning, and so were the Grenvilles. When Canning paid a visit to Wellesley in Ireland people thought it meant an intrigue against Liverpool. Indeed, only Liverpool's unfailing tact kept the Cabinet together at all. But we must now go back to consider for a few moments Canning's handling of the Greek question. For in one respect the results of the Greek revolt were not unlike those of the independence of the South American Republics. The Balkan Peninsula has become in our own days the playground of mutually hostile militant democracies, to whose gambols one foresees no end: and yet no one can wish that these should have remained for ever under the heel of the unspeakable Turk, any more than that Chile and Brazil should have continued to be misgoverned by the helpless Spaniards and Portuguese.

Both before and after 1822 our attitude towards the Greek question was dependent on two things—on the necessity of maintaining our Levantine trade, which any disturbance in these regions would be sure to upset, and on our traditional jealousy of the progress of Russia² in the Near and Middle

¹ *Journal of Researches during the Voyage of H.M.S. Beagle*, 133, 352, &c.

² Sir G. Ouseley (lately our minister in Persia) thinks that 'a Russian army will take 9 or 10 months to march from the Caucasus through Persia to Cabul and Delhi'. (Colchester, June 11, 1815.) The entry proves that the idea already was a familiar bugbear to British statesmen.

East. Ever since the Turks had been in Europe there had been an 'Eastern Question', and ever since her appearance as a European Power Russia had claimed to solve this question for her own profit. The eagle on her flag was the old bird of Byzantium—of the Eastern Roman Empire. The Patriarch of Constantinople was the greatest bishop of the Orthodox Church, of which Russia was such a devout son. Katharine the Great had talked big about reviving the Greek Empire: she had had her eldest grandson (now, 1822, Tsar of all the Russias) suckled by a Hellenic wet-nurse.¹ And now Turkey seemed evidently to be breaking up; what was to come after her? Pasha after Pasha was setting up for himself in the province which he nominally held for the Sultan—Mehemet Ali in Egypt, Ali Pasha in Epirus; even Black George, the Christian pig-breeder of Serbia, got some sort of independence in 1817. As for the expert pirates of the Greek Islands, no one had controlled them these fifty years past; most Greek patriots, indeed, have begun their careers either as brigands or pirates—land-thieves or sea-thieves. The Ionian Islands were already under British protection, the 'Danubian Provinces' (i. e. modern Roumania) were under Russian. Every successive treaty she had made had guaranteed Russia more and more rights of interference on behalf of Turkey's Christian subjects.

After all, Russia was on the spot and other Powers—except perhaps Austria—were not. And Austria had her hands too full of Italy to lend much weight to Metternich's protests against Russian aggression. Two 'Greek' revolts broke out in the spring of 1821, one in Roumania, which Alexander disavowed (calling its agents 'revolutionaries'), and this gave the Turks an excuse for sending troops thither, which by treaty they were bound not to do; the other at Patras on the southern shore of the Gulf of Corinth. Each began with a fearful massacre of innocent Mohammedans. The Sultan not unnaturally hanged the Greek Patriarch and two more bishops as a reprisal. But he could do very little more,

¹ This lady's ministrations having failed, the baby had to fall back on the milk of a Cossack cow.

for his best troops had been sent either to Roumania or to Epirus, where he had long been trying to put down the old 'Lion of Janina', Ali Pasha. So for the first three years the Greeks of the Morea had it pretty nearly their own way. Even before the Congress of Verona Castlereagh had allowed his Greek sympathies to be known; and his object had been to put pressure on Turkey towards such reasonable treatment of her revolted subjects that British commerce could go on unharmed by piracy or search, and also that Alexander should have no excuse for interference. Alexander's autocratic instincts told him that the Greeks were just as much 'revolutionaries' as the Roumanians; yet his own subjects would not allow him the luxury of treating them as such. Every Russian was furious at the martyrdom of the Greek Patriarch. And in the Greek matter, as in the Spanish, Canning merely emphasized Castlereagh's instructions when he sent Wellington to Verona. Austria's fear of Russia threw Metternich on the same side, and thus all 'joint intervention' in Greece on the part of that Congress was avoided.

But then, as the Turks, though steadily getting the worse in the Morea, would listen to no Western or Russian entreaties to behave reasonably, Canning in March 1823 suddenly recognized the Greeks as belligerents, and Alexander professed himself to be very angry. Volunteers were pouring over in crowds from England and France to help the Greeks, Richard Church, Lord Byron, and, later, Lord Cochrane, among the most famous: and Byron's death of fever at Missolonghi stimulated sentiment for the Greeks. In 1824 Mehemet Ali, hitherto in revolt against the Sultan, suddenly veered round and offered to his master his well-ordered Egyptian fleet and army, under his son Ibrahim, for the subjugation of the Greek rebels. The Sultan jumped at the offer; Ibrahim landed in the Morea, carried everything before him (though Missolonghi stood a year's wonderful siege, 1825-6), and for three years enjoyed the pleasure of a systematic extermination of the Greek people. This success no doubt hardened the Sultan to resist all pressure

from European Powers. Could Russia stand it any longer? Could Canning? Canning was as nervous about the whole thing as Alexander was. A conference was held at Petrograd in 1824. Canning first sent a representative, then withdrew him. The able Russian ambassador in London, Prince Lieven, could not make head or tail of what Canning wanted. The fact was that Canning had all the 'old Tory' members of the Cabinet against him, for they were all pro-Turk. Just before Alexander's death, at the end of 1825, Canning had made up his mind to act with Russia, and so Wellington was sent to Petrograd, ostensibly to congratulate the new Tsar Nicholas but also to agree to some sort of 'protocol'—oh no, not a treaty, please—in favour of some partially independent Greece. Nicholas knew that England only agreed to this in order to prevent Russia from acting alone, and Nicholas had the trumps in his hand. For two more years, while Ibrahim was reducing the Morea to a blood-soaked desert, Canning 'both would and wouldn't'. He would neither act with Russia, nor allow her to act alone, nor desert the Greeks, nor coerce the Turks. The Porte laughed ¹ at two-year-old protocols, as Nicholas always said it would. So at last this unfortunate protocol had to become the 'Treaty of London' for joint *naval* interference on behalf of the Greeks. France joined it, and sent Admiral de Rigny to act with our Admiral Codrington in the Levant (July 1827). Austria and Prussia not only refused to sign but protested. So the Holy Alliance was 'dead, cold, and intestate' at last. Canning died next month.

A naval blockade of the Morea by the Allies would effectually cut Ibrahim off from Egypt (his base of supplies and reinforcements), as well as from Constantinople, his master's seat; and it might or might not compel him to sign an armistice with the Greeks. Codrington offered him the latter alternative; he refused it and went on burning Greek villages in full sight of our fleet. We shut the large Egyptian fleet into the bay of Navarino and warned it not to move. Some of its fire-ships began to move and warning shots were

¹ Has it yet (1922) wholly ceased to laugh?

exchanged. A battle began, as it were accidentally, and in a few hours Ibrahim's entire fleet was knocked to pieces or sunk (October 20).

The Turks were of course furious at 'an attack on a friendly Power in time of peace', &c. Russia honestly proposed to follow it up by a united attack of the Allies on the Turks by land and sea. But the miserable Goderich ('Fred Robinson'), who succeeded Canning, was terrified, and almost disavowed Codrington.¹ Wellington, who succeeded 'goody Goderich' in January 1828, spoke of Navarino (in the King's speech) as 'an untoward event', and remained obstinately pro-Turk. Yet even he had to give way inch by inch to that same 'nature of things' which had compelled the recognition of the South American Republics. Russia went to open war with the Turks, though it cost her two years' fighting to burst the Balkan barrier. The Greeks, for their part, took heart; they had already proclaimed a republic. In August 1828 Codrington forced Mehemet Ali, by the threat of blowing Alexandria about his ears, to withdraw his troops from Greece, and they were withdrawn just after a French force had landed in Greece to bring further pressure to bear on them. Richard Church was leading Greek brigands to great successes in Aetolia and Locris, and at last Wellington was forced, after many growls, to accept (March 1829) the existence of an independent Greece as a fact. Yet it was not till Palmerston became Foreign Secretary in Lord Grey's Government that the final settlement was reached, and the northern frontier of the new Kingdom was fixed at the line from Arta to Volo (1832). Even then the Powers mortgaged the future by selecting a German prince to be King; such kings were one day to be disastrously numbered among the 'principal exports' of Germany.

Another old ally of Great Britain, Portugal, had given

¹ Codrington's instructions, 'to use every care to prevent their measures from degenerating into hostilities', were no doubt meant to be vague, and to throw the responsibility on himself and de Rigny.

Canning trouble from 1823 onwards: and, as henceforth there were to be in Spain a Constitutionalist and an Absolutist (one day to be called a Carlist) party, with alternate revolutions and proscriptions, so in Portugal there was to be something of the same kind. Brazil threw off the Portuguese yoke in 1822 and chose one son of its late sovereign to be a 'Constitutional Emperor'; and then another son set himself at the head of an Absolutist Government in Lisbon in opposition to his old father, and the latter squealed for British help. Spain and France were secretly, if not openly, backing the Absolutist horse, Dom Miguel, and at last Canning was obliged to send some troops to help the Constitutionalist. At Canning's death the best claimant to Portugal was a little girl, Donna Maria, of about six years. In 1828 our troops were recalled from Lisbon, and a merry civil war went on in Portugal. Little Maria came to England as a *reine-en-exil* and was petted by George IV. Wellington even refused to support her friends who were holding out in the Azores.

The last five years of Liverpool's Ministry are far more interesting at home than abroad, and, though the division in the Cabinet, between the old Tories and the new, was just as sharply felt at home, the new were steadily getting their way, and enlightened public opinion was backing them up. The habit of foreign travel¹ began directly the Continent was at peace, and was a great factor in opening the eyes of our countrymen, who soon came to see that several things (including criminal jurisprudence, of which more hereafter) were better managed in France than in Britain. And one result was that Peel and Huskisson were steadily taking the wind out of the sails of the smugglers and the Whigs alike. All but the most pragmatistical Whigs were often ready to vote with the Government, and the smuggling trade never recovered the enormous reduction of import duties which went on. Beginning in the good years of 1823-4 this reduction steadily continued, in spite of the

¹ Readers of Miss Austen will remember that Emma, a very well-to-do lady living in Surrey, 'had never seen the sea' (1815).

panic of 1825—sugar, cottons, woollens, iron, linens, silks, all benefited, as well as the lesser items of paper, glass, wine, and coffee. Moreover, our colonists exporting such articles to us were to pay a lesser duty than foreigners paid ; these early free-traders were wiser than their successors of the fifties and sixties. House-taxes and window-taxes were lowered ; bounties on whale- and herring-fisheries were abolished. The export of machinery and the emigration of artisans were allowed, in the teeth of the old-Tory howl that we were ‘ giving away those trade secrets ’ on which our manufacturing supremacy had rested. The first inroad on the great Navigation Laws of the seventeenth century was perhaps more questionable : yet what could we do ? Other countries were now seeking to ‘ protect ’ their shipping interests. It was mere reciprocal throat-cutting to go on saying that American goods should pay a heavy duty if they reached us in anything but British ships, when America had just begun to lay similar duties on British ships bringing British goods to her ports. Huskisson boldly proposed and carried a measure to admit to our harbours, on the same terms as British, ships of all nations that would do the same by us. But he did not throw these harbours open to all the world irrespective of such reciprocity : he did not throw open the coasting-trade between our home ports to foreigners : and he did not, in order to fill the pockets of shipowners, allow British ships to be manned by every species of *dago* who would work for lower wages, eat less and viler food, suffer worse usage, than British merchant-sailors would. His successors permitted, and are still permitting, all these things.

These movements in the direction of Free-trade were to the immediate benefit of all consumers, and in a very short time of all producers also. Ever since the resumption of cash-payments prices had been falling steadily and evenly ; and the revenue now drew new vigour from the very steel that seemed to be lopping off its branches. Such of the Debt as still stood at four per cent. was converted to three and a half. There was money to spare for public works on

a grand scale. Windsor Castle was largely rebuilt. The National Gallery was founded, and opened in 1824; large purchases were made to start it, and private munificence followed public expenditure. 'The ingenious design of Sir F. Trench for improving the Thames in its course through the metropolis by erecting suitable structures on a raised terrace on each bank'¹ was, however, deferred to a period of worse architecture. The present London Bridge was begun in 1824, though not completed till 1831. The British Museum received great accessions, including the splendid Library which it had been the hobby of George III to collect. Carlton House was pulled down, and the terrace that bears its name gradually grew in its place; Hyde Park, its gateways and its carriage-drive, began to assume the aspect we know to-day. The 'Zoo' dates a little later, from 1828. Large Government grants to help intending emigrants, especially to Canada and South Africa,² had begun even before this, for the Government was rightly alarmed at the increase of the town, as opposed to the country, population. But state-aided emigration is not a good remedy, for it is the vigorous and enterprising who go, the feeble who stay.

Another great measure of the year 1824 was the repeal of the 'Combination' or 'Conspiracy' Laws, which had made it illegal for combinations of workmen to force up, or of masters to force down, wages in any particular trade. Men

¹ Buckingham, ii. 164.

² In answer to an appeal from the Governor of Cape Colony in 1820, the 'Albany settlement' of 5,000 British colonists was sent out, and Port Elizabeth was founded; a smaller settlement was made in 1824 at Port Natal (now Durban), but Natal was not made a regular Colony till 1843, and not wholly separated from Cape Colony till 1856. Canada filled up with colonists more by natural process, the Red River Settlement, begun by Lord Selkirk in 1812, being the only big undertaking since the immigration of the United Empire Loyalists in 1784. But the expansion of agriculturists over the Great Plains was in full force from 1821. Porter (*Progress*, cap. I) gives the figures of emigration from the United Kingdom, decade by decade, from 1821: thus, nearly 200,000, 1821-31; nearly 500,000, 1831-41; 1½ millions, 1841-51; 2 millions, 1851-61; 1½ millions, 1861-71; the same, 1871-81.

who unanimously refused to work, i. e. 'strikers', might be indicted for 'conspiracy'. Some of these laws dated back to Tudor times, others were quite recent.¹ They had been only sporadically enforced, and strikes and Trade-unions had been perfectly well-known phenomena for at least a century and a half. The Unions had, however, till now been either secret, or illegal, or else were Friendly Societies, illegally acting as Trade-unions. Joseph Hume, at Place's dictation, first moved for the repeal in 1822 and Huskisson took up the case. Select Committees sat to hear evidence. The Repealing Act (1824) included a strong clause against intimidation on either side. But Place bitterly admitted that the artisans, for whose benefit the repeal was passed, simply thought of it as an incitement to strike, and did strike all over the country. They had in fact expected the repeal to produce an enormous and immediate increase of wages. The strikes of 1824-5 were accompanied by the most violent outrages on masters, which sometimes went the length of assassination. In the next year, therefore, a new Act had to be passed, strictly limiting the object of combinations to the settlement of wages, and giving magistrates summary power to act against all misuses of disputes. Peel, perhaps alone of his contemporaries, foresaw the rocks ahead of this dangerous question, the tyranny 'which numbers can exercise towards individuals, short of personal violence or actual threat, but nearly as effectual for its object'.² That tyranny has got visibly worse ever since 1824 and is going far to wreck industrial honesty to-day.

The prosperity of these years got a very rude shock in 1825. 'Sounds heard by night on mountains and in valleys were attributed by the ancient Greeks to the great god Pan, and hence, he was reputed to be the cause of any sudden and groundless fear'—of any 'Panic' terror. The word is not earlier in English than 1600. 'City men' used to say that

¹ Two Acts of 1799 and 1800 had gathered up the older law and made its provisions simpler and more stringent.

² *Sir R. Peel in Early Life, from His Private Papers*, edited by C. S. Parker, i. 379.

a 'panic' may be expected about every nine years. 'Overtrading', 'speculation', too great confidence, as the result of enormous prosperity—these are the normal causes of panics. Some huge new field is opened for the investment of capital, and everybody rushes to take advantage of it; then 'wildcat' companies, 'Spanish Jackass'¹ companies, spring up, and these soon burst, and bring down quite sound financial concerns in their fall. So it was with the South Sea trade in 1720, with the 'Railway Mania' in 1845; and so in 1825 with the field opened to capital in newly-liberated Spanish America. Enormous interest was offered on loans floated for the new Republics, or on mines to be opened in their territories, and bubble companies of every sort and kind were started in Britain. Investments in some such bubbles contributed to the ruin of Sir Walter Scott. Then began a run on local banks, nearly eighty of which stopped payment in 1825. The Bank of England itself barely weathered the storm in December. The distress spread to the wage-earners, whose condition had been rapidly growing better since 1821, and this led to fresh cries against the Corn-Laws. All 1826 this outcry went on, and there were more riots and more attacks on machinery. Temporary measures of relief were all that Parliament, then in its sixth year, could face; it was dissolved in June, and in the new Parliament, which met in November, nothing was done until Lord Liverpool had been struck down by paralysis in February 1827: Canning then managed to carry in the Commons a law which slightly modified that of 1815—corn was to be admitted from abroad when its price at home reached 60s., with a duty to run on a sliding scale above and below that price; this was defeated in the Lords by the Duke of Wellington, who, after all, had to pass something like it in 1828 when he became Prime Minister.

Nearly two months of suspense followed Liverpool's

¹ I have always thought this is a singularly inapt illustration, for a company formed to breed or import the fine (fleet and enduring) Spanish breed of *Equus Asinus* ought to be a most profitable concern both to the shareholders and the community.

illness. He alone had held together two mutually antagonistic sections of the Cabinet; was there no chance (he was only fifty-six) that he would recover? If he did not, who was to succeed him? Peel was the ablest man of all, and was wholly with the Canningites on all questions except the most burning, the Catholic, question. Could not he and Canning consent to serve together under some neutral? They could not. However Canning might luff—and he had been luffing ever since 1822—every one knew the Catholic question had to be fought out soon, and Peel was not as yet prepared to give way on that. Nor did a purely ‘Protestant’ administration seem possible, in spite of the zeal of Dr. Phillpotts, afterwards Bishop of Exeter, who had already begun his career of mischief-making and tale-bearing on that side. Even old Lord Redesdale ‘saw no individuals capable of making a Government without Canning’. The ‘old-Tories’ were politically bankrupt.

The honest, if narrow, Duke of Wellington was determined that he at least would no longer serve with Canning; yet when the King asked his advice he told him he must choose between Peel and Canning. The King was as anxious as a modern Oxford Don to avoid making up his mind: ‘but I told him’, said the Duke, ‘that he must do so: it was the only personal act the King of England had to perform. . . . Canning would give half his tenure of office to have me back in his Cabinet—I have reconciled the King to him forty times while I have been his colleague.’¹ So on April 12 it had to be Canning as First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer. Greville has a story, which he got from Melbourne, that ‘Canning said to the King, “Sir, your father broke the domination of the Whigs: I hope your Majesty will not endure that of the Tories”. “No,” said the King, “I’ll be damned if I do”, and he made him Minister.’² There was a general belief that Canning had been sounding the moderate Whigs even before Liverpool’s illness, and this was soon confirmed by the composition of the new Government. Out went Peel, Wellington, and,

¹ Colchester, May 15, 1827.

² Greville, iii. 137-8.

after a tenure of the Great Seal lasting for about a quarter of a century, that dear but rather *intransigent* old-Tory, Lord Eldon. Eldon was succeeded by the Master of the Rolls, Sir John Copley,¹ who took the title of Lord Lyndhurst. Lyndhurst was an acute lawyer but a bad rat; it was only in March that he had made a fierce anti-Catholic speech, for which Phillpotts had coached him. Robinson (Colonies) went as Lord Goderich to lead the House of Lords. Lord Lansdowne, a moderate and wise Whig, became Home Secretary, Lord Carlisle took the Privy Seal. Tierney was made Master of the Mint. William Lamb (next year to become Lord Melbourne) went as Chief Secretary to Ireland, Palmerston was Secretary-at-War, Dudley took the Foreign Office. Lord Holland, Fox's nephew, in the Lords, and Brougham, and even Burdett, in the Commons, supported Canning. But Grey stood aloof and made a dignified statement of his profound distrust of the new First Minister, declaring his intention to retire from public life 'unless brought forward occasionally by extreme emergencies'.

This, then, was obviously a pro-Catholic Government. Yet, when Parliament met on May 1st, Canning announced that the Catholic question 'stands where it stood in 1812'. Catholics and Corn were the two burning questions, and Canning failed in both. But he was ill all his time of office; he had caught a bad cold at the Duke of York's funeral in January, and he died on 8th August. Had he lived five years more what would he have done for the Catholics? Sidney Smith² said that 'to call Canning a legislator, a reasoner, and the conductor of the affairs of a great nation, was as absurd as if a butterfly were to teach bees to make honey'.

Lord Goderich, who took the Treasury on Canning's

¹ Copley was born at Boston, Mass., in 1772. 'When as a two-year-old infant he first quitted the land of his birth the North American colonies were part of the dominions of King George. As he lay on his death-bed the War of Secession was at its height and the fate of the Union was trembling in the balance.' (Atlay, *Victorian Chancellors*, i. 1.)

² *Peter Plymley's Letters*, No. vii; *Works*, ed. 1854, 514.

death and held together (?) the Canningites and moderate Whigs for five months, is famous mainly for having wept in the King's presence when, on January 8th, 1828, he resigned, and for Disraeli's epigram on him, 'a transient and embarrassed phantom'. Yet he had once been called 'Prosperity Robinson'.

He was succeeded by a patchwork of Canningites and old-Tories—seven pro- and six anti-Catholics—under the Duke of Wellington. The Duke, when he went to see the King, found him in bed 'dressed in a dirty silk jacket and a turban night-cap, one as greasy as the other; for, notwithstanding his coquetry about dress in public, he was extremely dirty and slovenly in private'.¹ That the new team could even contemplate acting together, now Canning was gone, is a proof that the general distrust of Canning had been justified. They did not get on well, and there was still distrust. Huskisson certainly ought to have been made Chancellor of the Exchequer.² Old Eldon thought he himself might at least have been offered the Presidentship of the Council. Wellesley, who left the Viceroyalty of Ireland in February, also expected to be included; the brothers had recently been on slightly better terms than usual, but the Marquis had been becoming more and more 'Whig-minded' for some years. The combination only held together till mid-May, when Huskisson upset it by a totally unnecessary resignation, which he vainly tried to recall the next day. Palmerston, Melbourne, and Dudley retired with him, and the Duke had, for the remainder of his tenure of office, a docile, but, with the exception of Peel, a wholly undistinguished, Cabinet.

It earned fame from the *volte-face* of its two leaders on the Catholic question. This we must now look at in more detail. No sadder story can be found in English history than the

¹ *A Portion of the Journal kept by Thomas Raikes, 1831-47, Sept. 24, 1843.*

² Peel had insisted on Huskisson's being at least included in the Cabinet, for he would not undertake to lead the Commons without him.

concession, in obedience to the dictates of a rebellious agitator, of that religious equality which had so long been refused when demanded by loyalty and reason. An example was thereby set to mobs and their movers which has borne worse and worse fruit with every succeeding year. There are other bad features in the story: the House of Lords, which has so often been accused of resisting the 'will of the People', in instances in which the said People has been misled by agitators into demanding something unreasonable, did in this instance make itself the mouthpiece of that will in its most bigoted and ignorant shape. There can be little question that universal suffrage would at any time reject all really beneficial changes, religious equality among them. George III was only able to prevent Pitt from 'emancipating' the Catholics in 1801 because his prejudices were based on those of the British people. Those prejudices had hardly grown less during the next three decades; and if the Duke had 'appealed to the people', i. e. dissolved Parliament and put to the constituencies in 1829 the question whether or no religious equality should be given, the answer would have been, 'No'; and, the wider the constituency, the more emphatic would have been the 'No', for, the more absolute a democracy is, the less account it will take of justice. And it was this ignorant prejudice to which the House of Lords gave voice in its frequent refusal to pass Catholic Relief Bills which had already passed the Commons.¹

It was a wholly unreasonable prejudice? Well, there is just this to be said for it: the Roman Catholic Church stood,

¹ Among several strange statements in Mr. Trevelyan's *Lord Grey of the Reform Bill* perhaps the strangest is on p. 177 to the effect that Grey and Grenville would have had no chance, if they had joined the Ministry in 1812, of forcing Catholic Emancipation through the Lords. Had the author only consulted Sir Thomas Erskine May's *Constit. Hist. of Engl.*, iii. 139 (not to speak of Hansard), he might have read that on June 22 of that year Canning carried his motion for consideration of the Catholic Claims in the Commons by 129 votes, and that Wellesley on July 1st was only beaten on a similar motion in the Lords by one vote. Mr. Trevelyan studiously avoids mentioning that Lord Castlereagh was always pro-Catholic.

and stands, for everything that is most un-British. Not only are its ministers bound, and rightly bound, to be indifferent to nationality because they derive their commission from a foreign and anti-national Head, and form part of a world-wide organization which can take no account of nationality, but also its whole outlook on life was then—perhaps is still—incomprehensible to our people. A ‘priest’ was something to be dreaded: ‘you never knew what he might be thinking or planning,’ and he certainly wouldn’t tell you. Moreover, the only things in English history which were familiar to uneducated Englishmen were the stories of the Marian martyrs, of the Spanish Armada, and ‘Gunpowder Plot’; while educated people knew that even the most liberal-minded Popes and bishops had never dared openly to disavow the duty of the Catholic Church to destroy heresy and burn heretics. If the average British voter could have seen the Irish peasants, even more ignorant than himself, being driven to the poll by their priests—often by physical force—to vote contrary to their natural wishes, and seen also loyal Catholic as well as Protestant laymen brutally ill-treated for opposing these priests, he might well have hesitated to admit a Church which could sanction such things to equality with his own.

Yet all this can avail little as a plea. That your opponent is a religious bigot cannot excuse you for imitating his bigotry. And certainly one of the greatest conquests of the nineteenth century has been that in Great Britain religious differences now count for little in politics or in social life. In Ireland they still do count, for they originated in political and racial antagonism, and have been fostered wholly in order that they should continue to widen that antagonism. But, as Lord Redesdale said, ‘everything is wrong in Ireland and has been wrong for at least 800 years, so far as we know anything of that country; and yet some people are so foolish as to imagine that Catholic Emancipation would set all right’.¹

Such people were soon to be undeceived, and not wholly

¹ Colchester, Sept. 18, 1824.

without deserving it. When Emancipation was given in 1829, it was avowedly given not because it was just or honourable to give it, but merely because it was expedient and in order to avoid civil war. It was the surrender of a long-besieged fortress without any conviction that it was right to surrender. It was followed by a series of surrenders, made equally without conviction, and without the winning of one scrap of gratitude from Ireland in return. And then thinking persons in Great Britain gradually began to grasp (though some profess not to have grasped it yet) the truth that Ireland infinitely prefers the possession of one real grievance to the redress of that, or of any number of grievances.

In 1829, except where Irish labourers had recently come to settle (some in Glasgow, some in the Lancashire towns), the number of Catholics in Britain was almost negligible. A few old Catholic families had peaceably clung to their creed, six peers among them. Most of these dreaded and avoided any association with the discontented Irish. Mr. Weld of Lulworth had recently founded the school of Stonyhurst, and had unfortunately placed it under Jesuit supervision. Two Catholic chapels had been newly built at Preston, and one in Glasgow, yet it may well be doubted whether there were 100,000 civilian Catholics in all in Great Britain. But in the army the number of Irish Catholic soldiers was enormous, and this fact no doubt seriously influenced Wellington's calculations in 1829. It would be no light task to coerce Ireland with an army of which perhaps one-third of the privates were of Irish birth.

And in Ireland itself three-quarters of the whole seven millions of people were Catholics. Since 1793 the county franchise had been in the hands of all forty-shilling freeholders, irrespective of creed, and many tiny freeholds had been created (as estates for life) by the Irish landlords simply in order to create votes for their own interest; you 'bred' freeholders as other people bred cattle. As Pitt had failed in 1801, so Grenville and Grey had failed in 1807 to get George III's consent to any further 'emancipation' of

Catholics. Grattan had steadily moved, between 1804 and his own death in 1820, for full admission of the Catholics to Parliament and offices, and Grattan's mantle had fallen upon the abler shoulders of Plunket. Had it not been for the quarrels between the Catholic laity and the Catholic clergy in Ireland, fostered by the baneful influence of one man, the cause would probably have triumphed before Castlereagh's death; it was not hopeless till 1824.

Daniel O'Connell, of an old Catholic Tory family in Kerry, had made a fortune at the Irish bar before he 'captured' in 1808 the 'Catholic Committee', of Dublin merchants and other well-to-do Catholics, which had long been a sober engine for presenting petitions to Parliament. He appears to have first aimed at Repeal of the Union rather than Emancipation, and he always kept Repeal as an arrow in his quiver. He professed to hate the idea of separation, and always talked in an exaggerated strain of his loyalty to the Crown. He believed in religious equality, and tried to discourage, though he could not always prevent, persecution of Protestants. But to create a fierce aggressive spirit in the Catholics, to wed this to an equally fierce democratic spirit, and to coerce bishops and priests into becoming his henchmen, were his supreme aims; once these things were accomplished he would use the new forces he had created according to circumstances. He showed extraordinary skill in walking round the Act of 1793, which had forbidden the assembly of unauthorized bodies of delegates; 'Association' after Association was created by him, each illegal in spirit, yet each for a time keeping within the letter of the law. If such an Association were dissolved, a new one, with different ostensible objects, at once sprang up, and generally consisted of the same members as its predecessor; and the organization of mass-meetings followed.

In 1812, as I said above, Canning had carried by a large majority in the Commons a motion in favour of a consideration of the whole Catholic question, and it was only lost by one vote in the Lords. Next year Pitt's scheme was revived; the State should endow the Catholic Church, and exercise,

after obtaining the consent of the Pope, a veto on the nomination of the bishops. The Pope and the College of Cardinals agreed. So did the enormous majority of the educated Irish and of the British lay Catholics. But O'Connell's foot was now on the neck of the Irish bishops, and they utterly refused to accept the Papal ruling; naturally enough the Pope began to waver and in 1815 withdrew from the negotiation. Grattan fiercely denounced O'Connell as the wrecker of the good cause. The only excuse for the Irish bishops is that their power over their flocks would be gone if they accepted the veto. Till that time many of them had been pious and simple men of religion; henceforth they had to become politicians and potential rebels.

Peel served as Chief Secretary in Ireland from 1812 to 1818; he learned to know O'Connell only too well, and, being cruelly sensitive to coarse vituperation, he had once challenged the 'Liberator' to a duel. His great work was the creation in 1814 of the Royal Irish Constabulary, that magnificent force which has been the mainstay of Irish loyalty, and of such order as has existed in Ireland, until to-day when its loyal members have been ignominiously driven out. Peel had no illusions on the amount of loyalty that existed, or on the order that it would be possible to maintain: 'this force', he wrote, 'was not meant to meet a temporary emergency', but 'was rendered necessary by the past state of Ireland for the last fifty years and by the probable state of it for the next five hundred'.¹ Two years later he wrote, in even more memorable words, of the 'total annihilation of conscience as a prevention of crime, the universal contempt in which any oath, except an unlawful one, is held by the mass of the people: . . . the delegate of the Catholics at Rome, a friar named Hayes, seems to hold the authority of the Pope in about as much respect as his lay constituents hold the authority of Parliament'.²

From the failure of 1813-15 there was a long pause, during which O'Connell's influence steadily grew, till 1821.

¹ Parker's *Peel*, i. 145.

² Colchester, ii. 591.

Then Plunket, who had already earned fame as an orator for the cause in 1813, made his great speech, and carried in the Commons, with the approbation of Castlereagh, the second reading of an Emancipation Bill by eleven votes.¹ Again the Lords rejected it. When Wellesley went as Lord-Lieutenant, Plunket followed him to Dublin as Attorney-General; but he was a 'vetoist', and O'Connell fastened undying hostility on him at once. Plunket could sway the intellectuals in the House of Commons; O'Connell, who had a voice like an Irish river, could play upon the passions of multitudes on a hillside. He played down to those passions too; he was the inventor of the art of political abuse in its coarsest form. Sometimes there was wit in it, as when he could call an adversary 'a lineal descendant of the Impenitent Thief'; more often it was mere scurrility against the 'base, bloody, and brutal Saxon'. In 1822 there was a potato famine followed by an Insurrection Act. Every person in a 'proclaimed' district had to be indoors by sunset, and all idle and disorderly persons might be arrested on suspicion. The Habeas Corpus Act was suspended, and there were special Commissions to try rioters. This has been constantly necessary in Ireland, for the universal contempt for morality in the matter of lawful oaths, to which Peel had referred in 1816, renders it impossible to empanel a jury honest enough to convict a prisoner of a crime, which the jury, and every one else in court, knows that he has committed. The famine, for the relief of which half a million was voted by Parliament, and still larger sums subscribed by private charity, led naturally to an increase of crime,² though Lecky is no doubt right in saying that the bulk of the crime was not committed by the poorest peasants but rather by young farmers. Much of it was directed against the iniquitous system of tithe. It was indeed a grievance far more real than any amount of exclu-

¹ Peel called Plunket's speech the 'finest he had ever heard'.

² Melbourne knew of a landlord in Tipperary who had been shot at so often, and was so hard to hit, that he was known as 'the woodcock'. (Torrens, *Melbourne*, p. 163.)

sion from political power, that Catholics should be obliged to pay tithe to support Protestant clergy. From this time onwards tithe could hardly be collected except (literally) at the point of the bayonet. An Act of 1823 partially remedied the grievance by allowing (not compelling) the commutation of tithes, and abolishing the unfair exemption hitherto enjoyed by pasture-lands. Many parishes took advantage of the Act, and more in the Catholic than in the Protestant districts. But the blind devotion of both English political parties to the maintenance of the Irish Protestant Church long prevented justice being done in this all-important matter.

In 1823 O'Connell launched the greatest of all his 'Associations' with no specified object except agitation, and early in the next year this was supported by the 'Catholic Rent' of a penny a month to be subscribed by every Catholic to promote the objects of the Association. Before the end of the campaign this rent had reached £2,700 per week. The priests excommunicated, and occasionally horse-whipped, every one who didn't pay, and every well-to-do Catholic who didn't pay much more than his penny. No accounts of the expenditure of this fund were ever rendered, and there is no doubt that O'Connell lived handsomely out of it. He never denied that he did, but no one could deny that he worked for his living, and he had given up his lucrative practice at the bar to devote himself to the cause. All his henchmen, and the expenses of all their meetings, were paid from it also. It is not a good plan—wages for politics leads to politics for wages. The Association, open to all subscribers of a guinea, of either religion, became a rebel parliament with public debates and reports in the papers.

Why did not Canning, when in office, insist—nay, why did he take office in 1822 without insisting—that the old-Tories must yield? He was firmer in the saddle for every year that passed. If he had insisted he might have wrecked Liverpool's Government? Yes, but if he had gone out on the question, after wrecking it, he might also have

wrecked any Government that would not agree to it. In 1822 he carried in the Commons a motion to allow Catholic peers to sit in the House of Lords: but in 1824 he hedged, in the hope of conciliating the Duke of York; 'he deserved', says Buckingham,¹ 'the dressing he got from Tierney.' In 1825 O'Connell was prosecuted for using words incentive to rebellion, but the Dublin grand-jury threw out the bill. In the same year Burdett, of all people, took the wind out of Canning's sails and again carried the motion for Emancipation and for an endowment of the Catholic Church² by 21 votes, and in the Lords only a ferocious, and most unconstitutional, speech of the Duke of York wrecked it. For the Duke not obscurely hinted that, if he ever became King, he would never accept such a Bill; he spoke, says one of Buckingham's correspondents, 'as if he at the age of 62 was certain of succeeding to his brother of 63'.³ There were rumours that even Wellington was wavering on the question.⁴ One result of the failure to prosecute O'Connell was that the Government suppressed the Catholic Association; O'Connell, after a visit to London in which he got in touch with leading English Whigs and Radicals and persuaded them of his loyalty, came back and re-created it under another name. He also took, at the General Election of 1826, the first of the steps which were to lead him to victory; he stormed a Protestant fortress in County Waterford, carrying his (Protestant) candidate, Mr. Stuart, in the teeth of the great family of the Beresfords. This was the first revolt of the 'forties' against their landlords, at the bidding of their priests. There was no doubt about the terrorism exercised; mobs waylaid and beat all who would not swear to vote for Stuart. This terrorism was anything

¹ ii. 75.

² It was sufficiently liberal: every bishop to receive £1,000 a year, priests £200, curates £60.

³ Buckingham, ii. 244.

⁴ And Sir Robert Inglis, who in 1829 was to succeed Peel in the representation of the University of Oxford, found even Peel 'not so zealous (for the Protestant cause) as could be wished'. (Colchester May 9, 1827.)

but favourable to the cause in England, and the pro-Catholics in the Commons were less numerous after the Election of 1826 than before it.

No time was granted to Canning, even if he had had the strength of will, to tackle the question when he became Premier in the spring of 1827, and his successor Goderich was not a man to tackle any question. Wellington and Peel, then, were left, early in 1828, face to face with such an agitation in Ireland as had not been seen since 1798. Wellesley had given no Governments any help during his seven years' vice-royalty; he took no pains to conciliate loyal Catholics, he only succeeded in alienating the Orangemen of Ulster. He was eaten up with his own dignity and became 'too magnificent to write letters'.¹ Melbourne, on the other hand, had done very well as Chief Secretary in Canning's and Goderich's Governments, and in the beginning of Wellington's, but he resigned with Huskisson in May 1828. Wellesley was replaced by Lord Anglesey, who openly encouraged the Catholics in every way, and even made friends with O'Connell. Wellington angrily recalled him on the eve of his own surrender, and Anglesey's parting advice to O'Connell was to continue his agitation.

But this is anticipating. Remember that the agitation appeared the more terrible to Englishmen for two reasons: first, that the Ulster Protestants, numerically few, but strong in intelligence and wealth, had a counter-agitation of their own. Even if the Government 'deserted' their cause (for they wrongly, but honestly, believed that to grant Emancipation was equivalent to such desertion), they were prepared to strike for it themselves. 'Brunswick clubs' were formed on the model of the old 'Orange lodges', and the 'glorious, pious, and immortal memory of King William III' was drunk, as their toast, quite as fervently as 'bloody end to the Pope'. And, secondly, that there were no defined limits to the objects of the Catholics. Perhaps O'Connell himself hardly knew till the last moment whether Repeal of the Union would not be a more paying cry than Emanci-

¹ Buckingham, ii. 92.

pation. Lord Redesdale shrewdly foresaw that Ireland, if she got a Catholic Parliament and Church, would not long remain united with Great Britain: 'they already boast the assurance of foreign assistance, and bid us look to the consequences of a continental war.'¹ He might have been writing in 1916-20! The wildest talk was flying about in Ireland, of which we learn much from another of Lord Colchester's correspondents, Dr. Hamilton. The peasants believed that fire was about to fall from Heaven and consume the Protestants: 'the priests are preaching about the day of judgement for which they bid their flocks be ready.'² The priests gave them nothing in charity,³ however much they were starving (and at times the starvation was very real), but they took everything from them. For charity the peasants invariably resorted to the Protestant landlords and clergy, who were supposed to be their worst enemies. Yet the peasant's belief in the power of his priest was boundless: at the date of the Waterford Election (1826) 'some of Mr. Palliser's tenants, who had promised to vote for Beresford, came to him and said they were very sorry they couldn't do so, as their priest had told them that, if they didn't vote for Mr. Stuart and their religion, he would turn them all into magpies and send them hopping through the world'.⁴

Wellington and Peel had not been in office a month before Lord John Russell, a young man but an old Whig (of Grey's school), suddenly electrified every one by proposing to repeal so much of the Test and Corporation Acts as would admit Protestant Dissenters to municipal offices, and to hold any office in the State. Every one, as it were, gasped out, 'Oh, why shouldn't they?' It was only a sentimental grievance

¹ Colchester, iii. 346.

² 'A priest who preaches this doctrine had a wake in his chapel for his mother for three days; they consumed 57 gallons of whisky at a cost of £18.' (Colchester, iii. 355.)

³ A priest's (usually very large) charitable gifts went wholly to religious foundations.

⁴ Colchester, iv. 461.

that was to be redressed, for since 1727 a series of annual Indemnity Acts had been passed which practically allowed them to hold any offices.¹ The Ministry made a brief stand, but, being defeated in the Commons, swung round and persuaded even the Bishops to agree, provided that the Dissenters would declare that they 'would never try to subvert the Church'. They have naturally been trying to subvert it ever since, but that is not to the point. The point is that this was a great victory for the cause of religious toleration. O'Connell grasped it in a moment and warmly supported the Dissenters' cause; with few exceptions the Dissenters rewarded him by bitterly opposing the Catholic claims. Soon Burdett moved his now annual motion in favour of the Catholics and won by six; it was lost in the Lords by forty-four. In May the Canningites went out, and Peel selected his friend Vesey Fitzgerald, M.P. for Clare, to succeed Grant at the Board of Trade. Fitzgerald was an able and popular pro-Catholic Irish landlord.

Much to the surprise of the Government O'Connell himself was nominated in opposition to Fitzgerald. It was not his own idea, and he was at first reluctant to stand. No doubt, as the law stood, he could not take his seat,² but he could be elected; he could even present himself at the Bar of the House and claim the seat; Cartwright had proposed something of the kind for Birmingham in 1819. Then was proved the strength and perfection of O'Connell's organization. He quietly ordered a suspension of all meetings, of all agitation, and was strictly obeyed. He even ordered

¹ There was nothing in the Test and Corporation Acts to exclude Protestant Dissenters from sitting in Parliament, but legally, not being admitted as members of Borough Corporations, they could not vote at elections in those boroughs where the franchise was in the hands of the Corporation.

² The oaths and declarations which, till the Act of 1829, prevented a Catholic from sitting in Parliament, were those of Charles II's reign, against Transubstantiation, the Invocation of Saints, and the Sacrifice of the Mass. There was also an oath abjuring the Stuarts, but, as there were no Stuarts alive after 1807, this did not matter, though it remained on the Statute-book till 1866.

the suspension of all whisky, and was again obeyed. 'Forty thousand' persons¹ marched in perfect order and sobriety into the little town of Ennis in Clare, and were fed by O'Connell's election-committee. There was no crime, no violence. It would be going too far to say there was no intimidation, for the whole thing was a colossal triumph for a policy based on intimidation. On the fifth day of the poll Fitzgerald withdrew utterly beaten, and O'Connell, to use a racing phrase, 'romped in'. The moment it was over O'Connell's prohibition on meetings (and on whisky) was taken off; it was said there were 2,000 meetings held in a single day. Catholic candidates were started everywhere, and would, had there been a general election, have won everywhere. In Tipperary especially such meetings began to wear a military complexion, and the southern edge of Ulster was half aflame on the other side. Civil war looked very near. Anglesey, who had left one of his legs on the field of Waterloo, was imploring his old commander to give way. Parliament was prorogued on July 28.

The Duke and Peel exchanged minutes and confidences in August, and Peel urged concession. He himself, though he would resign, would actually help, as a private member, to pass a measure. Lyndhurst (Chancellor) was also consulted; he had wisdom and foresight, though he had no more convictions than were convenient. But no other minister in the Cabinet (in truth there were few of any account) was consulted before the year was over. 'I don't believe the Duke is really going to propose Catholic Emancipation,' wrote old Sidmouth in November, 'still, *ipsa silentia terrent*.' There were fierce meetings of Protestant mobs in England—Kentishmen tub-spouting on the tradi-

¹ We have classical authority concerning County Clare to the effect that

It's little for blushing they care
Down there,

and no doubt there was a very large number of small 'freeholders'; but the above numbers are impossible, even if only half the marchers had votes. All sorts of wild figures are given; Lecky avoids precision.

tionary moot-stead of Kentish freedom, Pennenden Heath. It is generally believed that the long interval was used to persuade George IV, who was not far from his unhonoured end, to give way, although it was not till January that Wellington tried to get bishops to reason with him. The Bishops—Canterbury, York, London, Durham, refused; the Duke had to undertake the sordid task himself. On January 12 Peel honourably promised that he would stand by the Duke and see it through; the other members of the Cabinet raised no objections. On February 5 Parliament was opened, and the King's Speech mentioned 'relief for H.M. Catholic subjects'.¹ On March 5 the Bill was introduced: the Irish county franchise was to be raised to £10, and this resulted in the disfranchisement of nearly 200,000 Irish peasants; there was to be no veto on the appointment of bishops, no provision for the Catholic clergy. Catholics were not to be Regents, Lord Chancellors, or Lords-lieutenant, and against them, as against Protestant Dissenters, the University Tests remained. The fury of the old-Tories could and did burst on Peel's head in a far greater measure than on Wellington's, and he had to resign his seat for Oxford—that seat which Canning had so bitterly envied him.² But a foolish peer, Lord Winchilsea, called the Duke such bad names in a newspaper that the Duke was obliged to send him a challenge, and there was actually a duel, happily bloodless.

¹ Two days before the Bill was introduced, the King made a last effort to break the promise he had given to accept it: he sent for Wellington and Peel and talked madly to them for six hours: they resigned, but had hardly reached London when a messenger arrived to bid them stay and go on with the Bill.

² The Oxford Convocation agreed to petition against Catholic Emancipation by 164 votes to 48. At the subsequent Election, when Sir R. Inglis beat Peel, there were 'cheers for Lord Eldon, hisses for the King, hisses and groans for Peel'. Mr. Gladstone, who had been present, told the story at All Souls College in 1890, but his memory was so faulty that he thought only five votes had been cast against the petition. When Mr. Gladstone himself was a candidate for the University seat, the Warden of Merton recommended him to model himself upon Sir R. Inglis.

The Bill passed the Commons by a huge majority and the Lords by 105 votes; the latter figure proves that any strong and determined Government could have forced it through their House some years before; of the Bishops ten voted for, and nineteen against, the Bill. By a peculiar piece of spite or folly, which Sir J. R. Thursfield, in his *Life of Peel*, attributes to the King, O'Connell, although he appeared at the Bar and offered to take the new oath which the Bill imposed, was not allowed to take his seat for Clare until he had been re-elected. This of itself would have taken away the last spark of grace, if there had been any, with which the concession was granted. One thing and one thing alone can be said for the Ministry: they did not pass this Bill, as the Gladstones and the Disraelis of later times passed Bills to which at heart they were opposed, in order to obtain political power for themselves: they knew that in passing it they were wrecking their own party, and they believed their own future political careers to be hopelessly compromised. Peel could never have foreseen his own resurrection. He himself tentatively admitted that 'the engagements of party and an undue deference to the wishes of his constituents' had been allowed too much weight and had contributed to his long resistance.¹ The English Catholics, who had never been enthusiastic for the measure, hated the way it was carried, and O'Connell used laughingly to say that its only fault was that it did not exclude them. The last word was spoken (oddly enough, for he was no wit) by George IV, 'Oh, the Duke of Wellington is King of England, O'Connell is King of Ireland, I am only Dean of Windsor.'² On March 28 he had wept on Lord Eldon's neck and talked about retiring to Hanover. What a pity it was he didn't go!

Before we pass to the next great surrender to agitation, that of the Reform Bill, my readers must be reminded of the excellent work that Peel had been doing as Home Secretary

¹ Peel, *Memoirs*, i. 364 (really Peel's own Memoir on the Catholic Question), ed. by Stanhope and Cardwell, 1856.

² Colchester, iii. 612.

during the two periods of his tenure of that office. Here there was no surrender, only the logical process of reason-based conviction in his mind. The Criminal Law was a far greater blot on the Nation's scutcheon than any number of rotten boroughs, greater even than the religious inequality. Convictions for crime had enormously increased since 1800, and the penalty for nearly all felonies was death. As no jury would send a man to the gallows, or even to transportation, or to seven years' hard-labour (which were the next alternatives) for picking pockets, or stealing five shillings-worth of goods from a shop, or for the majority of the two hundred crimes¹ which still nominally carried the death-penalty, most criminals were simply found 'not guilty', went back to their criminal career, and bred criminal children. Even of those convicted not one in ten was ever hanged. Prisons were both horrible and ludicrous places, for debtors, felons, and occasionally lunatics also, were mixed up together in them, and the hard-labour tests were seldom exacted. Police there was as good as none, though every one was, by Common Law, liable to be drawn to serve as parish constable, and if drawn had to serve in person or by deputy—a very amateur business. Romilly spent the last ten years of his useful life in a crusade against this wicked and absurd system, and succeeded in getting two or three of the more glaring injustices removed; after 1812, soldiers or sailors convicted of begging on the high road were no longer to lie under sentence of death. When Romilly died in 1818, Mackintosh, a weaker but more hot-headed man, took up the cause, and Castlereagh supported his motion in 1819 for a Committee to consider the whole of the Criminal Law. This Committee recommended sweeping changes.

Early in 1823 Peel threw himself into the task and cleared off the death-list a hundred felonies at once. In the same

¹ For only twenty-five of these had any one ever been hanged! It was the 300-year-long process of removing benefit of clergy from crime after crime which left so many persons liable to be hanged. The last traces of benefit of clergy were wiped out in 1827.

year the first Act was passed for the prevention of cruelty to horses and cattle, and the R.S.P.C.A. was founded in 1824. Before Peel's first resignation in 1827 he had repealed or modified over 250 Criminal Statutes. In his second tenure, during the very crisis of the Catholic question, he dealt with a great number of similar laws, always mitigating the penalties, against assaults and forgery. When he resigned in 1830 there were only thirteen crimes still punishable with death. In 1829, moreover, he established the Metropolitan police, the astounding success of which has been the envy of all foreign nations; this was partly modelled on his Irish constabulary of 1814, and it was in Ireland, rather than in London, that the names of 'Bobby' and 'Peeler' first originated. The first task of the new force, and admirably it was performed, was to deal with the Reform-Bill riots in London. In 1830 Peel began a series of reforms among the minor officials of the Law Courts, added a judge to each of the three courts of Common Law, and abolished the separate judicial establishment of Wales. In all these matters, but especially upon the Civil side, he received support from Brougham, who had in 1828 moved for a Commission to inquire into the 'defects of the Laws of this Realm'; and Lyndhurst, as Chancellor, forthwith appointed two Commissions, one on the Law of Real Property, the other on the Procedure in the Common Law Courts.

The session of 1830 opened ominously. There was much distress in the country (for trade had not yet recovered from the panic of 1825-6), and some of it was attributed to Huskisson's Free-trade measures. There was rick-burning and a general increase of crime.¹ Peel was much dejected; he was constantly receiving threatening letters. Tierney died in January and left the lead of the Opposition in the

¹ 'I cannot but think', writes Mrs. Maurice to her son, 'that this rising of the people, these midnight fires, have been necessary to awaken us to a sense of the dreadful sin of poor labourers having been for many years obliged to work hard for scarcely wages enough to buy them potatoes.' (*Life of F. D. Maurice*, i. 114.)

Commons vacant. Brougham (who said he had a Reform Bill, ready drawn, in his pocket) claimed it noisily, but was quietly 'passed on the post' by Lord Althorp, heir of the house of Spencer, who was going to prove himself a remarkable leader. The Reform struggle began in February with an amendment to the Address. In May came the first public meeting of the Birmingham Political Union, which had been founded in January by Messrs. Attwood and Parkes. The House was still debating whether the members for recently disfranchised East Retford should be transferred to Birmingham¹ or not; it would have taken the wind out of Attwood's sails if they had been so transferred. Birmingham had then about 130,000 inhabitants. Huskisson, who by this time hardly knew if he were Whig or Tory, had badgered the Government during the whole Session, and Wellington had made some advances to him and to the rump of the Canningites. These had refused to listen. George IV died in June and Parliament was prorogued in July.

In that same month happened the 'Second French Revolution', the events of which were so delightfully explained by Mr. Jingle to Mr. Snodgrass on the Rochester coach.² A generation had been growing up which had forgotten the horrors of the First, and 'had been teased to death by hearing its parents talk about them'.³ The comparatively bloodless, *bourgeois*, character of the 'Three days of July' seemed to be a warrant for a sweeping, but equally peaceful, change at home. In October followed the revolt of Belgium from the Dutch, and the unlucky split into halves of the 'buffer state', so hopefully created in 1815, the Kingdom of the United Netherlands. Both these events were great blows to Wellington, who stood for the settlement of Europe as in 1815. Huskisson was killed in an accident⁴ in September, and the

¹ On the value set on the franchise by mediaeval Birmingham see vol. i, p. 281.

² *Pickwick Papers*, cap. ii.

³ Bagehot, *Biographical Studies*, 322.

⁴ At the opening of the railway between Liverpool and Manchester.

lead of the Canningites passed to Palmerston, a less original but more trustworthy man. The new Parliament met on November 2, and, in an answer to Grey's motion in the Lords in favour of a Reform of the House of Commons, Wellington made the fatal speech by which, as Melbourne said, he committed *felo de se*.¹ Althorp had repeated Grey's motion in the Commons, in which chamber parties were almost evenly balanced on the new question, and Brougham soon followed suit. But Wellington did not resign till mid-November, after his defeat on the Civil List. Then King William IV sent for Lord Grey.

King and Premier were an oddly assorted pair. The third son of George III was almost sixty-five when he ascended the throne: he was the only King since James II who had seen active service afloat, and as a young man he had been a friend of Nelson's. To the last he retained the manners of the 'breezy tar'. But with nearly every one in the Service he quarrelled at one time or another, more from want of mental balance, than from ill nature. It was a dangerous thing to ask him to respond to a toast, for he would ramble on for an indefinite time, and he seldom ended without insulting some one, present or absent. For these and other reasons it has always been a moot point whether it were to himself, or to his cousin the Duke of Gloucester, that the nickname of 'Silly Billy' was first or more fittingly applied. Canning, to every one's astonishment, had made him Lord High Admiral in 1827; as he insisted on putting to sea in command of the Channel Fleet, and making a number of promotions in defiance of the wishes of the Admiralty, he had to be made to resign. Yet he bore no malice—he seldom bore malice against any one except the Duchess of Kent—and was quite as ready in November to throw himself into the arms of Grey and Reform as he had been to welcome Wellington and Resistance at the moment of his accession. Probably

¹ The Duke said that 'if he were called on to create a Legislature he would never be able to create one so near perfection as the present, but would try to make one which should produce the same results'.

Reform pleased him at first as a sort of new toy: he could at least shake it gleefully over the coffin of his brother George, for whom he had always entertained a hearty contempt. 'Heartiness', in fact, was William's good quality as a man, if stiffer people thought it was his vice as a King. He could never be got to maintain the etiquette of his Court. 'He ought to be made to understand', says Greville, 'that his simplicity degenerates into vulgarity.'¹ He liked walking about unattended,² not, as did his contemporary Louis-Philippe across the Channel, in order to curry favour with the *bourgeoisie*, but because formality bored him. He had lived for twenty years with Mrs. Jordan as a left-handed wife and had ten children by her before they separated in 1811; he had also large numbers of other illegitimate children. In 1817 he married Adelaide, princess of this-that-or-the-other German 'royal' house; she bore him two daughters who died in infancy, and there seems to have been real affection between the pair. The Radicals, however, believed (and nothing is more likely) that all the Queen's influence was used against the Reform Bill.

Charles, second Earl Grey,³ had sat in the House of Commons before the First French Revolution; he was one year older than the new King. His alliance with Lord Grenville

¹ Greville, ii. 11.

² 'George IV', said Place, 'shut himself up from hatred of the people: the present silly man is courting them most absurdly.' (Wallas, *Life of Place*, p. 242.)

³ Except when he attempts to quote in Scottish dialect, Mr. Trevelyan, like Dean Swift, can, no doubt, write beautifully about a broomstick, and *a fortiori* about a windbag. Much of this chapter was written before I had read his *Lord Grey of the Reform Bill*, but I suppose I can only plead obdurate prejudice when I admit that the book has not very much changed my view. Mr. Trevelyan's real contribution to History is the letter of Grey to Holland on Dec. 6, 1820 (p. 373), to the effect that in that year he was prepared to sweep away 100 of the most 'obnoxious' borough seats and to divide the members thus gained between the large towns and the most populous counties. The biographer maintains that Grey (who was at least silent for the ensuing decade) never changed this view. Cf. also pp. 183, 240.

had begun to dissolve in 1814, and the breach had been steadily widening since that date. All the ensuing fifteen years he was believed to be an unflinching champion of Parliamentary Reform, as he certainly was of the Catholic cause. But it may be reasonably supposed that, to use Dr. Johnson's phrase, he would have eaten his dinner none the worse if he had never found himself at the head of a Government pledged to carry a Reform Bill,¹ and in his heart of hearts he hated Radicals rather more vehemently than he hated the old-Tories or even Canning. Still, he made an admirable figure-head, and, if Reform had got to come, it was better that it should be ushered into the world by this diffident and limited, but honourable man, than by some clever adventurer who might have capitulated to the extreme Radicals. And Grey's Bill at least gave us those first thirty years of Victoria's reign during which politics remained on the whole fairly clean.

I have said something in my third volume of the condition of the unreformed House of Commons.² A first 'Reform and Redistribution Bill' had been annexed to Cromwell's 'Instrument of Government' in 1653, and Lord Clarendon in his old age had commended that scheme.³ But, to go even behind this, we are apt to forget that the earliest Houses of Commons were the mere grouping, at a centre, of representatives of the old 'Shire Courts', and

¹ 'Always desponding, always out of spirits, unless he thinks he is riding the winning horse.' (Broughton, *Recollections*, iii. 22.)

² In what follows I must acknowledge my great debt to that most interesting book, *The Unreformed House of Commons*, by E. P. and A. G. Porritt, 1903.

³ 'He did not observe the old course in sending writs out to all the little boroughs throughout England which use to send burgesses (in which there is so great an inequality that some single counties send more members to the Parliament than six other counties do), he seemed to take a more equal way, by appointing more knights for every shire to be chosen and fewer burgesses, whereby the number of the whole was much lessened, and yet, the people being left to their own election, it was not thought an ill temperament, and was generally looked upon as an alteration fit to be more warrantably made in a better time.' (*History of the Great Rebellion*, ed. Macray, xiv. 43.)

that in these Courts the boroughs (there might be more than one in each shire, but there was always one) held a definite place; their representative 'burgesses', perhaps selected preliminarily in their boroughs, were 'returned' by the sheriff of each shire as part of the shire-representation. There was, then, originally, no thought of 'proportion to population' or of 'nose-counting'; the House was a federation of localities, not unlike the Senate of the United States. This idea, however, had been forgotten long before Oliver's time, and, in the debates on the Union with Scotland in 1707, the question whether representation should be according to population, or according to contribution of taxes, had been gravely discussed. In that instance a *via media* had been accepted. Meanwhile, borough representation had grown enormously, and, whereas there were, in 1830, 94 county members for England and Wales, 30 for Scotland, 65 for Ireland, for English and Welsh boroughs and cities sat 415, with four University members; for groups of Scottish boroughs, 15; for Irish boroughs, 35. The total was 658 members, and it was far too many. The statesmen of Oliver's time had shown great common sense in the enormous reduction they proposed. The Reformers of 1832 were too timid to be guided by their example.

Besides the overweight of the boroughs we must consider the great irregularity of the 'electoral map'; this by 1830 had totally failed to have any relation either to the wealth or the population of the country, both of which had been on the shift for some centuries before the Industrial Revolution. It had not perhaps been unreasonable that Cornwall should have several members when her tin was one of our main exports; it was absurd that she should now send forty-four members to the House when all Scotland only sent forty-five. Wilts, Somerset, and Norfolk owed their excessive representation to their once-famous woollen industries. The ten Southern English counties had one-third of the population of England, but they sent almost as many members as the other thirty. Wales, on the other hand, which was unrepresented until Henry VIII, enjoyed some-

thing like a scientific scheme under a Statute of that King, one member for each county, one for each of twelve groups of boroughs. In Mary's reign also had been added five English single-member boroughs. Apart, then, from those who cried out, 'Touch not the sacred fabric of the Constitution', few people could have much to say against a large measure of redistribution of seats.

It is a totally different matter when we come to the question of the franchise. The county franchise, under Statute 8 Henry VI, was already too low in the hands of the only class, the freeholders, that possessed it; and yet the richest copyholder or leaseholder in England possessed it not. Moreover small freeholds had been multiplied and divided, for electoral purposes, until it was difficult to say what was or what was not worth forty shillings, and it became very much a matter of custom. Such and such a tenement was 'deemed' to be a forty-shilling freehold; the Common Law simply revelled in the convenient process of 'deeming' a thing to be different from that which it appeared to be. Residence was not necessary, and it was quite common for people interested in politics to speculate in the purchase of tiny freeholds.¹ There was no electoral register, and there were endless disputes in consequence of this. Still, there was something that resembled uniformity in the English county franchise, and most of the county constituencies were so large that it was a costly matter to bribe them. In Scotland, on the other hand, the number of county electors was very small, for only holders of 'feudal superiorities' (i. e. descendants of the lesser-tenants-in-chief) voted, and totalled barely 1,000 in the whole thirty-three counties. In Ireland the county franchise had resembled the English, but the Act of 1829, disfranchising the 'forties', had reduced the total number to little over 30,000.

¹ Even after two Reform Bills, the writer remembers an Oxford don who possessed nineteen of these 'faggot-votes', and had, at a General Election, much ado to fly about over England to exercise his privileges.

It was in the English boroughs that the widest diversity prevailed. You might almost call the absence of system 'a wilderness of single instances'. The original idea of a voter was a 'burgess', some one in a town who corresponded to a freeholder in a county. But, as in England all rights and duties came to adhere to land rather than to persons, it looks as if the borough members of the early Parliaments were chosen by the holders of certain houses which had always been 'deemed' to be 'burgage-tenements'. Very likely in some boroughs these would be coextensive with the whole body of householders. But if a town outgrew its ancient boundaries no new burgage-tenements were thereby created; and, when representation became a valuable thing, the holders of the old burgage-tenements took care that they alone should retain the privilege of voting. If a rich man wanted to be elected all he had to do was to buy up the old burgage-tenements, i. e. the old vote-owning houses; and it was by this process that so many seats had become private property. Yet if a town fell down, as did Old Sarum, this could not extinguish the right to vote inherent in the several parcels of soil on which the ancient tenements had once stood. In Richmond (Yorks.) was the famous pigsty that conferred a vote; well, it was probably worth more silver than many another 'forty-shilling' freehold in that great county.

In some boroughs new-comers besides the old burgesses had successfully made good a right. In Preston (Lancs.) 'any inhabitant' (but what was an inhabitant?) could vote; in many places any one who 'boiled his own pot',¹ which practically meant any householder. In others the incorporating charters, of the 14th-16th centuries, had conferred an exclusive privilege of voting on the Mayor and Corporation; in some, the said corporators had simply usurped the exclusive right, as they had usurped all other rights of the townsmen. A less exclusive variety of this variety was where, as in the City of London, all freemen of the craft-

¹ Hence the 'pot-waller' (*weallan*, A.-S. = to boil), corrupted into 'potwalloper', franchise. There were 14,000 pots boiled, chiefly at the dictation of Mr. Place, in the City of Westminster.

guilds had votes, and, as such freemen could be 'created' without stint, these constituencies were generally large and increasing. Few of such freemen *monged* fish or *smithed* gold, but they were 'deemed' to be hereditary fishmongers or goldsmiths—especially for the purposes of an election. Such boroughs or cities would be as costly to bribe as a county. In all constituencies there were certain disqualifications for voting, and some, but not always the same, for the right of sitting in the Commons. By a statute of Anne (constantly evaded) no one could sit for a county unless he possessed land worth £600 a year, nor for a borough unless he possessed land worth £300 a year. Lunatics and aliens could neither sit nor vote. Clergy could vote (after 1664) but not sit.¹ Felons could not sit but, if they were freemen of Norwich, could be taken out of Norwich jail to record their votes. To be in receipt of relief from the Poor Law disqualified you in some boroughs but not in all. Revenue officers, since 1782, could not vote; Government contractors could not sit. Minors could not vote at an election, but could sit in the House, though not vote there. There was one Parliament (1404) in which no lawyers had sat. Judges (except the Master of the Rolls and the Judge of the Admiralty Court) could not sit. Peers of the United Kingdom could neither sit nor vote, but Irish and Scottish peers, not being representative peers under either Act of Union, could sit but not vote, and it was a high crime and misdemeanour for any peer to control, or otherwise influence, an election to the House of Commons. Yet Lord Lonsdale was represented in that House by nine members, whom he alone nominated for the nine boroughs that he 'owned', and his father owed his earldom to the way in which he had manipulated this influence. Nearly half the members of the House of Commons owed their seats to individual patrons, either peers or other rich men. 'Shall I not do what I like with mine own?' said the Duke of Newcastle, when he turned out of the tenements they held from him in Newark those who had voted against

¹ By 41 George III, *re* John Horne Tooke, who, however, was allowed to retain his seat (Old Sarum!) for that Parliament.

his wishes in the crisis of the Reform Bill.¹ George III had bought up boroughs wholesale in order to increase the influence of the Crown; successive ministries had followed his example, and such boroughs were known as 'Treasury Boroughs'. Lord Grey could hardly have carried the Reform Bill had not his party established a fund to purchase boroughs whose voters had hitherto obeyed their Tory patrons.

In Scotland the sixty-five boroughs were arranged in fourteen groups, each group to have one member; Edinburgh alone had a member to itself, and the writer's father well remembered when that member was elected by thirty-three baillies, most of whom were themselves self-elected. The total number of borough electors in Scotland was about 1,300. But at least there were no English 'carpet-baggers', no rich Jewish financiers, sitting for Scottish constituencies in those days. Nor was there any Landed Property Qualification Act in Scotland. In Ireland the Union had left only thirty-three boroughs, and of these only Dublin and Cork had two members each; of the others, only one was not in the hands of some patron.

When we have taken all these things into account it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that some regulation of the franchise, as well as some redistribution of seats, was desirable. Those, then, who wish to quarrel with the Reform Bill should take their stand upon two points, first that it fixed the franchise too low, and secondly that it came as a Bill, and not as a series of Bills: in other words, that its shape and its scope were dictated from outside the Houses of Parliament rather than from within them. In itself it was not a great Revolution, though it was avowedly passed in order to avoid a greater; but, from the way it was passed, it left a dovetail for subsequent changes so great as to amount to a Revolution.² Perhaps the best way in which

¹ This was shortly before he 'brought in' for the said borough of Newark that ardent young theological Tory, William Ewart Gladstone.

² 'Sempre una mutazione lascia lo addentellato per la edificazione dell'altra.' (Machiavelli, *Prince*, cap. 2.)

the Reformers could have proceeded was by a series of little Acts disfranchising Constituency A in favour of Constituency B.¹ Every constituency which could be reasonably argued to be too small, every one in which gross corruption could be proved, could thus have been gradually eliminated, and in every such Act a franchise could have been established suitable to the *genius loci* of the new constituency to be created. Uniformity, the bane of all democratic institutions, could thus have been avoided. You will answer that this had been tried by Lord John Russell during the previous decade, and had been successful only in the instance of Grampound, the Lords having refused to disfranchise Penryn, Camelford, and Barnstaple in 1821. But Penryn and East Retford had fallen in 1828—and now, in 1830, even 1828 seemed to be a long while ago.

Two other weapons might have been used with some effect, the prerogative of the Crown and the privileges of the House of Commons. The Crown could certainly not (since the Revolution of 1688) be used to disfranchise; but it had been used as late as Charles II to enfranchise Newark, and a popular use could now have been made of the Crown in order to create new constituencies. William IV would probably have been pleased to be so used. Again, pressure could have been brought to bear upon the Lords with the argument that, as we, the Commons, do not interfere when a case of disputed peerage comes before your honourable House, so your Lordships ought not to interfere when cases of disputed 'commonage' (if one may coin a word) come before us. This might easily have become one of what the late Professor Dicey called the 'Conventions of the Constitution'. It was their property in the nomination boroughs that the peers were so keen to defend? That is true to a certain extent, and was true of some peers, but not

¹ So far back as 1822 Croker, a bitter opponent of this Reform Bill, had been urging on Peel the need for some continuous and steady policy of removal of the worst abuses of the system of representation. (*Memoirs, Diaries, and Correspondence of J. W. Croker*, 1884, ii. 52; see also i. 135.)

of the House of Lords as a whole. Even if it had been true, such boroughs might have been left till the last, by which time enlightened public opinion (as opposed to that of the revolutionary mobs swayed by Messrs. Attwood, Place, and Company) would gradually have squeezed out opposition from both Houses. Moreover, I think some nomination boroughs, or some boroughs with no constituents to speak of, should have been left, in order that men of talent, without money or influence, should have a chance of entering Parliament in their youth. Special franchises might also have been created, some few, if you like, with universal suffrage, in order that there might be at least a sprinkling of all classes of men;¹ others with an educational franchise, giving larger numbers of votes according to the age until which a man had remained at school or college. A man of genius in Grey's place would perhaps have attempted some of these things.

Grey, however, was in the hands of men, by no means of genius yet of stronger character than himself, and his chief business was to keep them from quarrelling. His Government has been called a 'family party' because six members of his family got places in it. Of these, his son-in-law, Lord Durham, was Privy Seal; as Mr. Lambton in the Commons he had ardently supported John Russell's steady attacks on corrupt boroughs, but he had gone farther than any of the Whigs towards those extreme Radical views—equal electoral districts, universal suffrage, and vote by² ballot—to which Burdett had so often given voice. Durham was a quarrelsome man, and nearly wrecked the whole Government by an insult (December 19, 1831) to his father-in-law at the old man's own dinner table. But he was strong, and the wide franchise given in 1832 must stand largely to his credit (or discredit). Lord John Russell, Lambton's exact contemporary, was a son of that sixth Duke of Bedford who had

¹ There was in fact a more considerable sprinkling of all classes in the Unreformed than in the first Reformed Parliaments. Even in the crisis of 1830 'all the inhabitants' of Preston chose Orator Hunt in preference to the Whig Stanley. Hunt would not have had a dog's chance in any of the constituencies created in 1832.

² Durham also wanted Triennial Parliaments.

been a Radical almost before the name was known: he entered Parliament in the same year (1813) as Lambton and voted steadily with him for reform. He now became Paymaster of the Forces, a dry little man with a gift of lucid exposition and a readiness to undertake any task. If to be a Whig is to be a master of platitudes about liberty Lord John was the arch-Whig; in lack of any definite convictions on the subject he nearly approached his own leader, Grey. John William Ponsonby, Lord Duncannon, afterwards Earl of Bessborough, was a shrewd popular Irishman, a connexion of Lady Grey, and brother of Melbourne's half-insane wife; he had been Whip to the Whig party and now held minor office. Sir James Graham, First Lord of the Admiralty, of the great Border family at Netherby, was at this time another typical Whig, almost a prig too. And these four men, rather an oddly-selected four, drafted Grey's Reform Bill for him.

The Ministers who most nearly approached genius contributed only their criticisms. Most unwillingly Grey had to make Brougham Chancellor (Melbourne had had hopes of winning over Lyndhurst¹), and most unwillingly that firebrand accepted the Great Seal,² for he had wished to be Master of the Rolls in order to retain his seat in the Commons; Grey had quarrelled with him and been reconciled to him more than once, but never trusted him. Wellesley became Lord Steward, Anglesey went back to Ireland as Lord-Lieutenant, with Plunket (too late for his fame) as Irish Chancellor, and Mr. Stanley, afterwards Earl of Derby, an impetuous, unsteady, clever, young man, as Chief Secretary. A nice mess, between them, they made of their Irish administration. Lord Palmerston, regarded as the leader of

¹ Atlay, *Victorian Chancellors*, i. 78, 79. No formal offer was made to him, and he regained, by his resignation, the esteem which he had lost in 1829. He accepted the post of Chief Baron of the Exchequer.

² Great law reformer and originator as Brougham was, he proved a bad occupant of the woolsack—his sole idea was to clear off arrears anyhow, to expedite judgements. He would not attend to the business in hand nor get up his cases. And he was, owing to his quarrelsome disposition, an almost equally bad Speaker of the Lords.

Canning's old party, offered himself to Grey as Chancellor of the Exchequer and leader of the Commons, but Grey made the curious, and, as it turned out, lucky, selection of Lord Althorp instead, and Palmerston embarked on the first period of his long tenure of the Foreign Office; of him more hereafter. William Lamb, Lord Melbourne,¹ became Home Secretary, and showed a happy mixture of firmness and conciliation in administering the office which, in those three years of riot, was perhaps the most difficult of all. He was now fifty-one and had been in Parliament since 1806, in the Lords for the last two years. He was a first-rate scholar and far more widely read than most of his political contemporaries; sensitive, sceptical, self-distrustful, and without illusions, he had suffered from two domestic tragedies, an erring wife and a son of weak intellect, and he bore his suffering with admirable courage. He was wrongly accused, all his life, of levity and cynicism. He hated formalities, and dreaded doctrinaires and bores, but even to those he was always courteous. Beginning as a rather ardent Whig he had rallied to Canning, and must now be classed with Palmerston as being convinced of the necessity for some reform, but not for too sweeping a measure. His weakness lay in his dislike of quarrels, in his anxiety to effect compromises in order to avoid them. 'Can't you leave it alone?' expressed Melbourne's view about too many things. Yet intellectually he was head and shoulders above any one in the Government.²

Curiously parallel to Melbourne, for 'they steered by the same star', was the Chancellor of the Exchequer, John Charles Spencer, Lord Althorp, son of Pitt's industrious Admiralty man. He was, however, entirely without Melbourne's wide reading, and had no intellectual interests at all, though he had rather a passion for arithmetic. He too

¹ His sister, Lady Cowper, married Palmerston in 1839.

² 'Mihi semper in animo fuit ut in rostris Curiam, in Senatu populum, defenderem' was his favourite Ciceronian maxim (*Melbourne Papers*, ed. Ll. Sanders, 100). It is not quite accurately quoted from Cicero, *In L. Calpurnium Pisonem*, iii. 7.

had had a tragedy, the death of a beloved wife, in his youth. Three years younger than Melbourne, he had been in the Commons since 1804. Somewhat of an advanced Radical (for instance, he, like Durham, wanted the ballot and household suffrage), he had given steady, if sluggish, opposition to Liverpool's Ministry, but not to Canning's or Goderich's. In his hatred of show and cant he closely resembled Melbourne, as he did in his actual dislike to sitting, speaking, or voting, in Parliament. But once in the saddle he never shirked his duties. His one passion was for 'seeing sporting dogs hunt', and he is unique in having been successively the best Master of Foxhounds, and, in the judgement of his contemporaries (not necessarily of posterity), the best leader of the House of Commons in English history. Greville, writing at the date of his death, 1845, calls him 'the very model and type of an English gentleman: he marched through the mazes of politics with that straightforward bravery which was the result of sincerity, singleness of purpose, the absence of all selfishness, and a true, genuine, yet unpretending, patriotism . . . he possessed the faculty of disarming his political antagonists of all bitterness and animosity towards him'.¹ There is much more to the same effect; Althorp's character is perhaps the fairest that the 'Gruncher' ever drew. But that did not prevent Greville from criticizing his friend's terrible floundering in finance in 1831² and on several other occasions.

It was Althorp who carried the Reform Bill, and even Grey acknowledged as much. Yet he had the defects of his qualities and these have given Mr. Bagehot³ the text for one of his admirable sermons on the defects of English statesmen: 'A crude good sense goes no way in [the solution of] such problems [as then lay before the nation]. . . . If you set men like Lord Althorp to guide legislative changes in complex institutions, being without culture they do not know how these institutions grew; being without insight they only

¹ Greville, v. 295.

² Greville, ii. 66, 114, 116; iii. 62, &c.

³ *Biographical Studies*, ed. 1899, 305 sqq. (written in 1877).

see one-half of their effect; being without foresight they do not know what will happen if they are enlarged; being without originality they cannot devise anything new to supply, if necessary, the place of the old. Common sense they no doubt have; but common sense without instruction can no more wisely revise old institutions than it can write the Nautical Almanack. . . . English History is full of such men, and England has been made mainly by them; but they fail in later times when the work of the past is accumulated and no question is any longer simple.' This may be too brilliantly stated (for common sense implies some insight), but it is substantially true.

Just before the resignation of Wellington in November 1830 there had been an ominous drop in the Funds. And there were other symptoms of danger; two successive bad harvests had sent up the price of bread, and that again sent up the Poor-rate to an unprecedented height. There were sporadic attacks on property, especially on farmers' property, all over the southern counties, and country gentlemen were going about armed. The Birmingham Union, whose members wore light-blue ribbons, was, as Huskisson had said in the spring, only too like O'Connell's Catholic Association, and Irish crime-methods seemed to be spreading to Britain. The new Metropolitan policemen were unpopular with the London criminals. Place (though he had no sympathy with criminals, who would have plundered No. 16 Charing Cross quite as cheerfully as any other shop) did not want merely a *bourgeois* revolution. If he didn't want bloodshed he wanted the Duke to resist at least sufficiently to give excuse for an armed rebellion, on the French model, with a National Guard and some substitute for a Jacobin Club. A refusal to pay taxes, and a run on all banks, would, he thought, paralyse London; all shops would be shut and starvation would begin. Attwood¹ at Birmingham, with

¹ Raikes (*Journal*, i. 83) notices that every one is frightened of Attwood. He tells us that Lord Hertford (Becky Sharpe's Marquis of Steyne), thinking it was all over with Britain, invested some £300,000 or £400,000 in some State of *Apodidraskiana* or other in

whom Place began to correspond in the autumn, did not at first want to go as far as this, but by 1832 he was prepared to march on London; and during their subsequent history Attwood grew hot as Place grew cold. In November 1830 Place's eyes were somewhat opened, when sixty of the new policemen sent an enormous mob of London rioters flying.

The new Government at once issued a proclamation against riots, and appointed a special Commission to try rick-burners and other rioters. And when, in March 1831, John Russell brought forward the first Reform Bill in the Commons, Place shifted his attitude, and pretended to be well pleased with it. He also pretended that it was mainly owing to his pressure that the Bill proposed so big a change. The Bill, indeed, went far beyond that which any moderate Whig had hoped or feared, and it has often been said that, if Peel had got up and answered Russell at once, it would not have survived a first reading.¹ Throughout the debates Peel always said that he would not have opposed a moderate measure of reform, but he voted consistently against this measure, and he led the Opposition almost single-handed. Remember that he was still bitterly distrusted by the strong Tories for having turned round on them to carry Catholic Emancipation. The second reading of the Bill was carried in April by only one vote. In an often-quoted letter to his friend Ellis, young Mr. Macaulay, Fellow of Trinity, who had owed his seat for Lord Lansdowne's borough of Calne to his slashing articles in the *Edinburgh Review* against the Radicals of the *Westminster Review*, describes the scene in the House at the division: 'We had six hundred and eight members present, more by fifty-five than ever were in a division before. The Ayes and Noes were like two volleys of cannon from opposite sides of a field of battle . . . you might have heard

America, which State shortly afterwards repudiated its whole debt. We think this served his lordship right. The infamous old reprobate lived till 1842. 'His life and death were equally disgusting and revolting to every good and moral feeling.' (Greville, v. 90.)

¹ Brougham told this to Greville in 1833 (Greville, iii. 23), and every one has quoted it. But one may question the soundness of Brougham's judgement.

a pin drop when Duncannon read the numbers. Then again the shouts broke out and many of us shed tears. I could scarcely refrain. And the jaw of Peel fell; and the face of Twiss [afterwards Lord Eldon's biographer] was as the face of a damned soul; and Herries looked like Judas taking his necktie off for the last operation . . . so ended a scene which will probably never be equalled till the reformed Parliament wants reforming, and that I hope will not be till the days of our grandchildren.' ¹

The whole movement, both inside and outside Parliament, had gone at such extraordinary speed that few people had kept their heads. Grey was evidently being carried off his legs, if not off his head as well, or he would never have accepted the £10 franchise in the boroughs in place of the £20 which was the utmost he himself had wished. His colleagues seem to have left to him only the task of managing the King; this appealed to his personal vanity, and was at first not difficult. When they were beaten in Committee there was no alternative but resignation or dissolution. Would the King dissolve? Perhaps he would not have consented to do so if an address to him against dissolution had not been moved in the Lords. This put up the old gentleman's back, and 'wearing his crown all awry as he came,' he dissolved Parliament on April 21st. There were no material amendments when the Bill was reintroduced in the new House two months later, but there was a very material change in the composition of that House. The country had got its back up as well as the King, and the most popular of all election-cries had made the tour of every hustings in the kingdom, 'The Bill, the whole Bill, and nothing but the Bill'. The result was that the Whigs had a majority of 136 on the second reading (July 8th) and of 109 on the third (September 21). No doubt many voted for the Bill, as was the habit of timid members of the Lower House, with the certainty that it would be rejected by the Upper. That happened under the leadership of Lyndhurst on October

¹ March 30, 1831, *Life and Letters of Lord Macaulay*, ed. Sir G. O. Trevelyan, i. 207-8.

8th by 41 votes, of which 21¹ were the votes of bishops! Most of the other votes given against the Bill were not those of the older Peerage, either Whig or Tory, but of the new creations which had been so lavishly made during Pitt's long ministry. London newspapers appeared with black edges next day. Brougham had made a foolish melodramatic scene by going on his knees and imploring the peers to pass the Bill. Some peers, supposing him to be merely drunk, lifted him up and put him back on the woolsack.

Meanwhile Place was suffering the usual fate of demagogues; he was being passed in the race by spirits wilder than himself. As the Jacobins, in the Paris of 1793, were outdone by the Cordeliers, so Place's 'National and Political Union', founded in October 1831, with Burdett as Chairman, for avowed support of the Bill as at least an instalment of freedom (Place never admitted that it was more than this), was being outdone by a body calling itself the 'National Union of the Working Classes'. This met at a building called the *Rotunda* in Blackfriars Road. It called for a general strike, denouncing the Tories, the Whigs, and the Bill, with great impartiality. Arms were being collected for this Union (*quaere*, for both Unions?). There were ugly symptoms elsewhere—riots at Derby, riots at Nottingham (where the gaol was burned), worst of all at Bristol, which city was for three days in the hands of the mob, and emerged from these hands on November 1st to find half of itself in ashes. Attwood had kept good order at Birmingham, even while he was preparing for rebellion, and no doubt the contrast between Birmingham and Bristol made a powerful impression on minds like Wellington's. Wellington had seen more of war than most people, and knew what a horrible thing a civil war would be. But Melbourne gave discretionary powers to Lord Hill and Lord Fitzroy Somerset to hold troops ready to deal with rebellion if it should come.

¹ Mr. Trevelyan (p. 289) well points out the amazing mistake made by the leaders of the Church in their fierce opposition to the Bill. This opposition immeasurably weakened the hold of the Church on the middle and lower classes.

Grey was also induced to tell Place, who went on a deputation to him, that all riots would be firmly put down. Grey was perhaps wavering towards a compromise, and was certainly considering the effect of the whole business on his own political reputation.

When Parliament reassembled on December 6, and the Bill, at its third introduction in the Commons, was found to be substantially the same as at its first and second,¹ the country became again comparatively tranquil. After the Christmas adjournment the third reading was carried in the Commons without a division. The country was suffering from a visitation of the Asiatic cholera, which reached London in February 1832 and produced great distress. In the Lords, in spite of the savage violence of the Bishop of Exeter, the second reading was carried, but only by nine votes (April 12). There was now a small knot of so-called 'Waverers', led by Lords Harrowby and Wharncliffe, for it; their fear was that Grey would force the King to create enough peers to pass it—fifty would have been enough. Grey and Althorp were known to be against any such step, but Durham was urging it fiercely. The King would be most averse from anything of the kind; he was getting tired of his new toy, and the Queen was reputed to be giving him curtain-lectures against the Whigs. Lyndhurst wrecked the Bill in Committee on May 7th, and Grey resigned next day.

Then the country, and especially the capital, indeed went mad with anger. 'It was rumoured that the B.P.U. was to march on London and we [the Scots Greys, then quartered in Birmingham] were to stop them . . . we were booted and saddled night and day and our pouches were filled with ball cartridge.'² The King sent for Lyndhurst, Lyndhurst got

¹ Sixteen of the boroughs doomed to extinction by the first Bill were now only to lose one member, but more large towns were to be enfranchised, and the numbers of the House were not to be diminished; the first Bill had slightly diminished them.

² Alex. Somerville, *Autobiography of a Working Man*, 231, 244. A. S. makes the incredible statement that 'our swords were rough-ground'. He also says that the Greys, though they could be relied

the support of the Duke, but could not get that of Peel. For six days, May 10–15, there was suspense; only the most second-rate persons consented to serve on Lyndhurst's terms, which were 'a compromise and yet a substantial measure of Reform'. Petitions were poured in on the House of Commons—first from the City of London—begging it to refuse to grant supply. Cards appeared in windows with 'No taxes paid here'; timid people were buying up whole grocers' shops of provisions. On May 13 appeared a placard all over London, 'To stop the Duke go for gold,' i. e. let there be a run on the Bank of England. On the 15th Lyndhurst, who had been for fighting it out to the last, threw up the sponge, and the Duke advised the King to call Grey back. Grey, now a mere drift-log on a torrent,¹ swallowed his previous resistance, and refused to come back unless the King would promise to create enough peers to swamp the Opposition. The King tried to avoid this by writing personal letters to some leading opponents of the Bill advising them to cease their opposition. But he was made also to promise creation if necessary. Wellington, Lyndhurst, and some forty others, thereupon walked out of the House of Lords: the third reading was carried (on King George III's birthday! June 4) and the Bill became law three days later.

This Act of 1832 gave the county vote to all freeholders, copyholders, and sixty-year leaseholders, whose holding was of £10 annual value; to all holders of a twenty-year lease, and to all tenants-at-will occupying lands, of £50 annual value. In boroughs, a uniform franchise was given to those who were in occupation of houses worth £10 a year. Of the

on to put down all destructive riots, would have refused to 'fire on the people', and this is possibly true. He got into trouble for writing a letter to a newspaper in which he made this statement; he was most unjustly court-martialled and flogged, ostensibly for another offence, really for this letter, the writing of which he avowed on his trial.

¹ In February 1832 'Grey said "D—n Reform, I wish I had never touched it": "a fine fellow", said one of Hobhouse's friends, "whom we are trying to make a great man of against his will—*bon gré, mal gré,*" a wretched pun.' (Broughton, iv. 174.)

old boroughs in England and Wales fifty-six lost both their members, thirty-one lost one each. This left a hundred and forty-three seats to be redistributed, and while sixty-five new seats were given to county constituencies, twenty-two large towns, hitherto unrepresented, got two members each, and twenty-one got one member each. There were separate Reform Bills, run through at the same time, for Ireland and Scotland. The Scottish representation was increased to fifty-three, Edinburgh and Glasgow getting two members each, Perth, Aberdeen, and Dundee one each, the group-system being retained for the rest of the Scottish boroughs; a franchise as nearly as possible similar to the English was introduced for counties and boroughs alike. The Irish representation was even less pulled about; the few boroughs which the Union of 1800 had left standing were not disfranchised, and in them, although the £10 franchise was established as in the counties, the jobbery at elections went on as gaily as it does to-day. As Lord Redesdale said in 1824, 'everything is always job in Ireland'.¹ The Irish county representation was increased by five members. The Census of 1831 had put the population of Great Britain at 16½, that of Ireland at 7¾ millions.

¹ Colchester, iii. 323.

CHAPTER III

WHIG GOVERNMENT, 1832-41

'It does not seem to me', says Lecky,¹ 'that the world has ever seen a better constitution than England enjoyed between 1832 and 1867.' And, as a matter of theory, if you must have uniformity, the £10 franchise, on which that constitution was based, was not unreasonable; while, as a matter of fact, the steady amelioration of institutions and law, which is perhaps the best ideal for Governments in this imperfect world, was continued under the new conditions on much the same lines as under the old. But this had begun, and very successfully, under the old.

Melbourne had feared that a large contingent of violent Radicals would be returned to the new House of Commons, and he was wrong. There were a few very 'new' men (Cobbett, sitting for Oldham, was one), but there was as little change in the outward aspect of St. Stephen's as in its inward spirit.² The House of Lords had received a bad set-back, but was in no temper to admit it, and, during the next few years, its less enlightened members opposed a serious resistance to some of the best measures of the Whig Government. Yet no attempt was made in either House to upset the settlement of 1832; Robert Peel, as head of the 'Conservative' Party, and John Russell, the

¹ *Democracy and Liberty*, i. 18.

² 'This Reformed House', wrote Palmerston in March 1834, 'is going to be wonderfully like all its predecessors, impatient of fools, intolerant of blackguards, tired with debate, and disposed generally to put confidence in Government on all subjects which the members do not understand, or in which their particular constituents have not a direct interest.' (Dalling, *Life of Palmerston*, ii. 177. Lord Dalling's share in this *Life* extends, in 3 volumes, to 1847; its third volume was edited by Evelyn Ashley, who then continued the work, in two more vols., till Palmerston's death, but the second of these becomes very thin towards the end.)

typical Reform-Bill Whig, alike regarded that settlement as final. Outside Parliament the agitation was slow to die down; indeed, it has never died down during the last ninety years. Englishmen, being political animals, naturally think that a political reform will give them what they want, yet, as Bagehot pointed out, the real need in 1830 was not so much political as social reform, and we may question whether a middle-class electorate is likely to be a perfect agent for procuring social reform. Mr. Disraeli thought it was not, and, when he at last got power, he passed several useful measures for bettering the condition of the poor. But in his first effort to keep in power he had to favour the cry for a further instalment of political reform; so that I do not see that, in this respect, he differed much from his rival Gladstone, who, for a similar object, pushed the poor old Constitution still farther down the hill towards the flat plain of pure democracy. A body travelling down an inclined-plane becomes swifter in motion in proportion to the length of its journey; and if we apply this metaphor to political life, we shall have to remember that a political inclined-plane is apt to be greased. One unforeseen result of the Bill of 1832 was the gradual elimination of independent intelligence in the Commons: the Ministry has become everything, the private member, its natural critic, almost nothing. This did not happen all at once; in all the early post-Reform parliaments there was some Lord Ashley, some Disraeli, some Hume or Roebuck or Duncombe, sure of an attentive hearing, however severe his criticism might be; O'Connell, who never commanded even half the Irish votes, could always command an audience. But now the thing has become a voting machine and reason and imagination are alike stifled.

The five ensuing years were marked by the passing of three great and beneficial measures, and by attempts at, or instalments of, several more. In 1833 Stanley, as Colonial Secretary, carried the abolition of slavery in our West Indian Colonies; there was to be an 'apprenticeship' of the existing slaves to their present masters for seven years,

but henceforth all children were to be born free; a gift of twenty millions was to compensate the masters. Although this was less than half the estimated value of the slaves, it was a noble gift, nobly voted to redress a great wrong more than two centuries old. No gift, however, could long avert the ruin of the West Indies which was the inevitable consequence of Abolition. The African negro, who alone has the strength for field-labour in that climate, will not work except under compulsion and is quite content to live and multiply on sunshine and bananas; if you give him wages he spends half his earnings in tawdry finery. The last chance to make his labour pay vanished when in 1846 we admitted sugar from slave-holding countries at the same duty as that from our own Colonies. I am not defending either Slavery or Protection; I am merely pointing out that some of the noblest moral reforms of the century have had disastrous economic consequences. Mr. Gladstone, who, after a distinguished career at Oxford, had come in for the Duke of Newcastle's 'rotten', but still existing, borough of Newark¹ early in '33, spoke for fifty minutes against Stanley's Bill; he was prompted by a filial motive, for his father owned plantations and received £75,000 as compensation for the freedom of his 1,609 slaves. It was not unnatural that the Colonial Assembly of Jamaica,² consisting entirely of planters, should refuse to recognize emancipation: it remained perpetually athwart the Colonial Office, and the social treatment meted out to the freedmen bred a new generation of blacks far more hostile to the whites than the slaves had been. The result was seen in the serious riots of 1865, bravely if fiercely suppressed by Mr. Eyre at the expense of his own reputation, and in the abolition of the

¹ On the second day of the poll his agent told him that nearly every man in Newark was drunk. (Morley, *Life of Gladstone*, i. 96.)

² Jamaica had in 1833 about 10,000 whites and 320,000 slaves. Regulations to improve the treatment of the slaves had been ordered by the Home Government in 1823, but the planters had refused to put them in force, and there had been a fierce insurrection in 1831. Gladstone spoke in favour of the planters (on the question for terminating the period of 'apprenticeship') as late as 1838.

Jamaican Assembly in the following year.¹ Another melancholy fact is that the natural repulsion, which is mutually felt by the white and black races, can be dated almost entirely from the time of Abolition. Frank Barber, Dr. Johnson's faithful servant, or the beloved *Gumbo* of *Sir George Warrington*, would be inconceivable to us to-day.

More successful in the long run, yet, in its earlier years, of precarious life, was the Poor Law Amendment Act. Lord Grey was still at the Treasury when Althorp moved and carried, almost without opposition, this very daring measure. He had moved for a Committee of investigation into the subject early in 1832, and it had been engaging the attention of Governments since 1817. I have written in a previous volume² of the vicious circle within which the whole system of relief was moving long before 1815, and every year that passed was making the orbit wider and more vicious. The Poor-rate had originally been intended to fall on all property alike, but 'personal property flits and land remains', and so it had come to fall wholly on land: in 1834 it had reached the terrible figure of 8s. 9d. per head of the population. Much land, unable to bear further rating, was going out of cultivation. All objects of the original Act of 43 Elizabeth except relief were neglected, and relief had come to mean merely a supplement to wages. The parish, being solely responsible for levying the rate, naturally tried to shift all who were, or were likely to become, chargeable on its rates to another parish, and there was endless and costly litigation

¹ Governor Eyre, who in his youth had been famous for his humane treatment of the Australian aborigines, proclaimed martial law, hanged several persons and flogged others. A Commission appointed by Earl Russell's Government reported against him; he was twice indicted by a committee of advanced humanitarians, headed by J. S. Mill, after his return to England, but on each occasion the Grand Jury threw out the bill; and he found many defenders among humane Englishmen, including Mill's own friend, Carlyle. It must be remembered that Eyre had real reason to fear a racial war, in which all the horrors of the insurrection in French San Domingo (now Hayti) would be reproduced.

² iv. 208 sqq.

to determine where the 'settlement' of particular paupers lay. Good and bad workmen received equal rewards, for the less you earned in wages the larger was your dole from the rates,¹ and as Castlereagh said in 1817 (he might have been speaking of 1920), 'all the cunning of uncultivated minds was being directed towards the means of escaping from labour and enjoying the fruits of the labour of others'. Bad farmers constantly employed paupers in preference to real-wage-earning labourers.

The Commission of 1832 consisted of true experts (there were no members of the House of Commons on it), and their Report was a very brave document. Its substance may be summed up as follows: (1) No more relief to the able-bodied poor except in 'workhouses',² of which one shall be built in each 'Union' (a large group of parishes); (2) such relief, and any relief to be granted to the aged or sick in their own homes (henceforward called 'outdoor' relief), is to be administered by 'Guardians' elected by the ratepayers of the Union; (3) a Central Commission of three persons is to be created to frame regulations for the guidance of Guardians; (4) the existing Laws of Settlement are abolished and a man is deemed to be settled in the parish of his birth.³ There were several weak points in the Act which was based on this Report. In the first place, too much was left to the wisdom, or unwisdom, of the local Guardians. Some of us are only too familiar with the local grocer, who begins his political career by a 'humane' crusade in favour of indiscriminate outdoor relief and ends as M.P. for his city. The Central Commission, superseded by the Poor Law Board of 1848, and merged in the Local

¹ Mr. T. Mackay quotes an instance of some Bledlow labourers who *preferred* to be paupers in their own parish rather than go to a neighbouring parish to earn splendid wages on a new railway that was being made. (*Six Lectures on the Public Relief of the Poor*, 1901, pp. 53, 103.)

² The name 'Workhouse' is not satisfactory, for in practice it is impossible to exact work from the inmates of the house.

³ This also was found unsatisfactory. An Act of 1865 allows one year's residence in any Union to constitute a settlement.

Government Board of 1871, has never been able to enforce its views universally, although, where these have been rigorously enforced, not only has outdoor relief almost disappeared, but the numbers seeking indoor relief have also diminished enormously, and the population has been braced to self-help and thrift. Outdoor relief has been steadily increasing since 1870, and stood in 1910 towards indoor relief in the proportion of two to one. Some twenty-five per thousand of the English, and twenty per thousand of the Scottish¹ population, were in receipt of relief at that date, and the cost has increased from £4,500,000 in 1840 to £14,000,000. Secondly, the Act of 1834 was passed only for five years and had to be renewed quinquennially till 1848; each renewal was greeted with fierce disapproval by the unthrifty, by the sentimentalists, and by more than one brand of politician. Disraeli held many original views on English History, but few more curious than the view that the poor-rate was the 'ransom' due to the poor from those land-owners who had appropriated monastic lands in the sixteenth century. He was quite in earnest in using the New Poor Law as a stick with which to beat successive Governments, but was he wholly disinterested? Cobbett had already condemned it as a 'bargain between land-lords and factory-lords to provide cheap labour'. Some Dissenting ministers and some English Churchmen combined to denounce it as 'unchristian'.

Thirdly, it must be remembered that the problem is still with us, and is still perhaps the most difficult of all our problems. In years of bad trade, of unemployment, and of high prices, it is almost impossible to avoid some relaxation of principles. If men were real 'economic units' they would move automatically to places where good wages were to be obtained;² but they are not, and never will be, such

¹ The Irish Poor Law was introduced in 1838, the Scottish in 1845. 1840 was the year of lowest cost under the new law.

² One such movement did take place soon after the new Act, a large emigration from the most pauperized districts of the South into Lancashire and Yorkshire, and from country to town. But now the wheel has come full circle and the country districts are depleted, yet no re-migration to them takes place.

units, and no satisfactory expedient for assisting genuine workmen in temporary distress has yet been discovered. Lastly, it would probably have been wise in 1834 to make the cost of relief a national, and not a local, charge, and that is what (Sir) Edwin Chadwick, the ablest of the Commissioners, wanted to do. Even this in the long run would not have solved the problem. The fatal grant of 'old age pensions' in 1908, irrespective of the thrift or unthrift of the receiver, has only in appearance been a relief to the rates, and has put it into the power of any demagogue to angle for more votes by further promises of the same kind. And there is no getting over the fact that there are too many people in this little country and too little work for them to do.

The third great triumph of Whig Governments between '32 and '41 was the reform of the Municipal Corporations in 1835, and in this, as in the other two, they had the advantage of much assistance from Sir Robert Peel on the front Opposition bench. Lyndhurst, however, in the other House, so pulled the Act about that many abuses remained to be swept away as late as 1882. Why the Lords should have chosen for defence such sordid creatures as the old Municipalities, now that all their real use, as electors to the House of Commons, had gone, is not easy to see; but there was always a vein of irresponsibility and mischief in Lord Lyndhurst. The late F. W. Maitland, with his peculiar and unapproachable humour, has shown us¹ the strange history and growth of these ancient societies, most of which had received charters from the later Plantagenets, the Tudors, or the Stuarts; he has shown us also the still stranger view that the Corporations took of their duties and their property.² They simply ate and drank the rents they received

¹ *Township and Borough*, 1898.

² 'He thought that the property belonged *bona fide* to the Corporation' and 'that they had a right to do what they pleased with their own . . . a right to expend their income on themselves and their friends, without being obliged to apply any part of it to the good of the town'. (*T. and B.*, 97-8.) Such was the evidence of a Common

and the rates (if any) they levied. They neither lit, nor paved, nor drained, their town. They elected themselves, or rather their members elected and re-elected each other, from year to year; they elected their own aldermen and justices of the peace for life, and some of these could neither read nor write. They administered, for the benefit of their families and friends, schools and charitable institutions often of considerable wealth.

The Act of 1835 was of Melbourne's own drafting; he had learned, as Home Secretary, something about Corporations. It wiped out over threescore little boroughs altogether; it created municipal institutions in a large number of those new boroughs and cities¹ which had only begun a semi-corporate existence for the purposes of the Reform Bill. It dealt in all with nearly two hundred towns, and in each city or borough it established a 'Common Council', to be elected by all ten-pound householders; one-third of its members was to retire every year, and by this Council a Mayor annually, and Aldermen sexennially, were to be elected. Their accounts were to be audited and published, and no dealings with municipal property were to be allowed without the sanction of the Government (since 1871 of the Local Government Board). The Crown was to appoint the J.P.'s, and their administration of justice was to be entirely separated from the other business of the borough. The Scottish boroughs were, as Galt has shown us in his delightful story *The Provost*, no whit behind their southern neighbours in corruption, and the Bill for their reform preceded the English Bill by two years. If the effect of these Acts, and of their subsequent amending Acts, has not been the complete disappearance from our towns of that which Americans call 'graft' and 'boodle', we must remember that grocers and other tradesmen are not always perfect men; yet a grocer whose accounts are publicly audited is likely to be

Councilman of the Borough of Cambridge before Mr. Justice Lawrence in 1803.

¹ e.g. Manchester had to be 'incorporated' in 1838. Cobden was chosen one of its first Aldermen.

less imperfect than one who audits them himself. The worst feature of the new Municipalities has been their extravagance, and this has too often been sanctioned by the Local Government Board. When in 1910 the capital of the National Debt stood at 733 millions, that of local debts had already reached 512, while the total income of the bodies responsible for local debts was only 168 millions.

Before we discuss the 'attempts and instalments' mentioned above, let us look as briefly as possible at 'politics' themselves, that is to say at the succession of Ministers that tried to govern the United Kingdom between 1832 and 1841. One of the limbs of that Union, Ireland, long ago described by Clarendon¹ as 'a sponge to draw and a gulph to swallow all that could be spared and all that could be got from England', was going to make it plain that it at least would not be governed at all, and from that hour to this it has been entirely successful in its effort. In the first Reformed House there was a group of members which early earned the name of 'O'Connell's tail', professing loyalty to the Crown, but hostility to the Act of Union; there was also a larger Irish group as yet loyal to both. There was a small but able group of English doctrinaire Radicals, of whom George Grote the historian (the 'member for Mrs. Grote'), Sir William Molesworth (for John Stuart Mill and the 'Utilitarians'), Roebuck, and our old friend Hume, were the best known. There was an ill-compacted, and not large, Tory Opposition, whose real strength lay in the Upper House. Peel, its leader, was as odious to the 'pigtail Tories' (the phrase is Palmerston's) of Eldon's views, for having emancipated the Catholics, as to the Radicals for having opposed Reform. I shall not quote Disraeli's character of Peel,² for it has been borrowed (without acknowledgement)

¹ *Great Rebellion*, ed. Macray, i. 162.

² *Life of Lord George Bentinck*, ed. 1874, p. 229. Drawn by a political enemy, who was happily incapable of rancour, this character could hardly be bettered for insight. Yet I hope, in the course of my story, to put forward for Peel claims which Disraeli could not be expected to allow.

by too many writers. It speaks volumes for Peel's personal uprightness as well as for his Parliamentary skill (the two qualities have seldom been so well combined), volumes also for the common sense of English gentlemen, that before long Peel had won from the aristocracy 'not merely their confidence but also their homage and affectionate devotion'. Yet it was not till the end of 1834, when Peel put forward, in a letter to his constituents, that which is known as the 'Tamworth Manifesto',¹ that his party gained any real cohesion.

Cohesion in the triumphant Whig party was not conspicuously closer. Grey had passed his Reform Bill, and he considered it a fine exploit and himself its hero.² He loved adulation and got little enough of it in his Cabinet, certainly none from his son-in-law Durham, who was in constant ill health and ever on the verge of resignation (he resigned in fact early in 1833). Grey would have shown more dignity if he also had resigned at once instead of sulking at Howick. His Chancellor Brougham was a free-lance who delighted to embroil his colleagues with each other. Palmerston was wholly taken up with the duties of the Foreign Office; Stanley, first as Irish, then as Colonial Secretary, was somewhat of an adventurer; hard, clear, brilliant, lazy, whether he was playing Whig or Tory, and to the end of his life hardly knowing which he was; Graham at the Admiralty was pompous and boring in Parliament, an unbending Whig till he suddenly became a Tory, and an unsatisfactory Tory till he again became a sort of Whig. So the main burden of the first two sessions fell on three men: on the patient

¹ 'The Tamworth Manifesto was an attempt to construct a party without principles; its basis therefore was necessarily latitudinarian; and its inevitable consequence has been practical infidelity.' (*Coningsby*, ii. 5.) Words, words, Mr. Disraeli, or, as Hamlet put it, 'Buz, Buz'.

² 'The more I see the less I think of him: and I am surprised how, by mere fluency of speech and arrogance of manner, this really inferior man has contrived to lead a great party, and to connect his name imperishably with the most splendid triumphs of British legislation.' (Broughton, *Recollections*, v. 55.)

Althorp at the Exchequer, who was only longing to get back to 'the purest of human pleasures':¹ on John Russell (Grey had actually forgotten to include him in the Cabinet until his father, the Duke of Bedford, hinted that his services in 1831 merited it), who was at his best in these early years, clear and far-sighted, with some gift for legislation, but always fretful and occasionally, as he was afterwards to prove, inconstant; and lastly on the Home Secretary, Melbourne. Melbourne had the most difficult task of all; his admirable handling of the riots preceding and accompanying the passage of the Bill has been insufficiently recognized. In other respects Melbourne was merely the most interesting, the most lovable, person who played a leading part in the nineteenth century. But, though blessed with abundant *sang-froid*, he entirely lacked ruthlessness, and was as sceptical about politics as he was about everything except scholarship and kindness of heart. His friend and biographer, Torrens, says of him, after he became Premier, that he was 'never master in his own Cabinet and never attempted to be, but he was the most persuasive unifier of distracted opinions that ever lived'. Also perhaps he came nearer to pacifying Ireland than any previous or subsequent British minister.

The Reform Bill had been passed during the raging of a furious Tithe War in Ireland, marked as usual by murders and outrages, and by pitched battles between gangs of young farmers and the police. Althorp brought in a measure for the complete redemption of Tithe,² and Stanley added a Coercion Bill, the main clause of which empowered magistrates in disturbed districts to arrest all persons who were out of doors between sunset and sunrise. The former Bill suppressed ten of the twenty-two Irish Protestant sees, and proposed to allocate a large sum out of church revenues to secular purposes for the benefit of the Irish people. This was the famous 'Appropriation Clause' and was as hateful to the Tory Churchmen in England, as the 'Curfew Clause'

¹ *Vide supra*, p. 100.

² i.e. to make compulsory the permissive Act of 1823.

of the other Bill was to O'Connell and his friends in Ireland. Thus in 1833 the Ministry was in hot water at once, and it soon showed its weakness by abandoning the Appropriation Clause. Stanley resigned because he disliked the clause, Durham because he disliked its abandonment, and the former took the Colonial Office. Althorp further weakened the Cabinet by an unsatisfactory Budget, and by abandoning some proposed taxes in deference to popular outcry. But the same session saw the passing of the first important Factory Act.

The state of things which rendered this Act necessary had arisen when the invention of machinery for spinning and weaving made it possible to substitute unskilled for skilled labour, female for male, infant for adult, hands. Attention had been called to the consequent evils even before the First French Revolution. The Act of 1802¹ was almost a dead letter, though a copy of it was supposed to be hung up in every cotton-mill, and an amending Act of 1819, also the work of the elder Peel at the instance of Robert Owen, had been little more successful. In 1830 Mr. Sadler, a Tory member, began to fight the cause of the children, and, when he lost his seat in 1832, Lord Ashley, afterwards seventh Earl of Shaftesbury, took up Sadler's mantle and entered upon his life-long crusade.

Ashley was a strange product to find among the descendants of the 'Achitophel' of Charles II's days, and was perhaps not wholly in his element as a connexion of such worldlings as Palmerston and Melbourne. He was passionately 'Evangelical', a bigot in his adherence to a narrow Protestant creed.² His voluminous diaries, quoted at great length in Mr. Hodder's biography of him,³ are almost morbid in their religious 'unction'. In private life he was

¹ See vol. iv, p. 208.

² This has perhaps been overstated; Ashley's diary shows that, when he was abroad, he saw what genuine devotion the Roman Catholic system produced, and he always loved a fine Cathedral service in England.

³ *Life and Work of the Seventh Earl of Shaftesbury*, by E. Hodder, 3 vols., 1886.

(perhaps owing to his unhappy childhood) self-distrustful and melancholy. Until he succeeded his father in 1851¹ he was miserably poor, and had to stint himself and his family remorselessly in order to be able to give help to the charitable causes which he espoused. In public life he was patient of delay, undaunted in defeat, unelated in triumph. He never took anything on trust, but investigated every source of evil himself, going into the foulest of slums at the most dangerous hours of night, descending coal-mines, bearding factory-managers in their mills, and holding meetings of professional thieves. As with Johnson's friend Levett,

In Misery's darkest caverns known,
His ready help was ever nigh,
Where hopeless anguish pour'd his groan,
And lonely want retir'd to die.

For 'politics' he cared nothing at all; of the poor and the oppressed and the unfortunate he was one of the noblest champions that ever lived.

A terrible state of things was disclosed in 1833: pauper children who had perhaps no parents ('parish children' was the expression) were sent in coach-loads to any factory that wanted hands by any parish which wanted to lower its rates; it did not matter much whether they were crippled or no, and hardly mattered at all (so plentiful was the supply of this 'labour') whether they lived or died. There were also non-pauper children from five years old working thirteen hours a day and earning a shilling a week; it was admitted that the greed and callousness of their parents was as much to blame as that of the employers; it was admitted that the smaller employers were worse than the larger; it was admitted that the conditions were almost as bad where weaving and spinning were still carried on by hand in cottages. But the case against the Cotton Factories as a whole was fully made out. Unfortunately there were

¹ His father was a hard landlord, and Ashley often suffered abuse on account of the miserable conditions under which his father's labourers lived and worked on their Dorset property; when he succeeded to the estates he at once set to work to remedy all this.

rigid 'economists' to reply that any shortening of the hours, any limitation of the supply, of labour would 'drive trade out of the country'.

In 1833 Ashley had to accept a compromise. Althorp and Melbourne supported his main principle, and the Act forbade all employment in Cotton Factories under nine years of age, limited that of children under thirteen to eight hours, of 'young persons' (i.e. under eighteen) to twelve hours, and forbade night-work. Inspectors were appointed with extensive and carefully defined powers—a pretty time these gentlemen had of it in some places. This was an instalment of reform only, and we must pursue the question farther when we come to Peel's Ministry. One cruel result was that the poor little kittens of five and upwards were transferred by their parents to labour in the mines, because these were as yet free from the 'nuisance' of inspection.¹

In 1834 the rift in the Cabinet became more evident. Stanley appeared as a 'champion of the Church' after he and Graham had quarrelled with the Appropriation Clause in the Irish Tithe Bill. When the necessary Coercion Bill was re-introduced, one section of the Cabinet wished to omit its most stringent provisions, another to re-enact them, and Grey resigned because they were omitted. Althorp nearly seized the opportunity to run away also, and was with difficulty pulled back by Melbourne, on whom all his remaining colleagues fixed as the only possible successor to Grey. In the early autumn all seemed patched up, and then on November 10 Lord Spencer, Althorp's father, suddenly died. This called Althorp to the Lords and left John Russell Melbourne's only possible leader in the Commons. The King, who disliked Russell, seized the chance, and dismissed a Ministry which commanded a substantial majority in the Commons. No one even now quite

¹ It is interesting to see that Place, who wished to forbid all factory labour to women, and to both sexes below the age of twenty-one, was equally strong against any limitation of hours for adult males. I give Place a very good mark here.

knows¹ why he took this very unconstitutional step. Brougham, who had been making absurd speeches, and generally dancing about in the North as an 'itinerant mountebank' (the phrase is attributed to the King), said, or got *The Times* to say, it was 'all the Queen's doing', and we do know that Queen Adelaide had seriously disliked the Reform Bill and its authors. But William was given to doing rash things. The situation was made worse by the fact that Peel was travelling in Italy, and, before the days of railways and telegraphs, it would probably be a month before he could be caught and brought back. He was, however, found, after an exciting chase, by (Sir) James Hudson in Rome, and he reached London on December 9th, twenty-four days after Melbourne's dismissal. Meanwhile the King had made Lyndhurst Chancellor, and the Duke of Wellington First Lord of the Treasury and 'Lord-high-everything-else'. There was no need for all this scramble; William should at least have allowed the Whig Ministers to retain their offices till Peel's arrival. It was at this date that Lyndhurst, on the look-out for recruits, began to patronize 'young Disraeli', whom he had already met at Lady Blessington's.

Two months before, the venerable chapel of St. Stephen, up the floor of which King Charles had walked so quickly on January 5, 1642, was burned to the ground, and the House of Lords was seriously damaged by the same fire. It seemed to Melbourne to be the passing away of the old order of things. The new Houses, the work of Sir Charles Barry, were not formally opened till 1850.²

Sir Robert had little difficulty in forming a Government,

¹ Many stories were current; the whole thing was so sudden that most Ministers first learned of their dismissal from *The Times* of Nov. 15. Melbourne's interview with William took place at Brighton. On his return to London he told Brougham, pledging him to secrecy, and Brougham promptly went and told Barnes, the editor of *The Times*. The great power of *The Times* dated from about this year. If one could attribute any foresight to William IV one would be tempted to say that his distrust of John Russell was not ill-founded.

² The restored House of Lords was first used in 1847.

though those recent converts, Stanley and Graham, would not help him. The Duke took the Foreign Office and Lord Aberdeen the Colonies. Parliament was dissolved, the 'Tamworth Manifesto' was issued, and the 'Conservatives' (the word now comes into occasional use) gained nearly a hundred seats. But even this was not enough, and, when the new Parliament met in the spring of 1835, Peel was moderately, but decisively, defeated on every serious division. Disgusted as he was, the King had to reinstate the Whig crew, with Melbourne as Captain and John Russell as First Lieutenant. Nothing could prevail on Melbourne, placable as he generally was, to bring back the intriguer Brougham to the woolsack, although, by not doing so, he lost the only debater who had a chance of standing up to Lyndhurst in the Upper House. Brougham remained an exile from power, and a critic (occasionally a useful one) of all Governments, until the close of his long life.¹ The Great Seal was put in Commission till 1836, when Melbourne gave it to a sound lawyer, Pepys, who became Lord Cottenham; 'a sturdy, obstinate Whig, who knew his own mind',² and a very useful member of the Cabinet.

The name 'Liberal' for the Whigs is first found in a letter of Russell's in February 1835. The Whigs had gained in reputation, though they had lost in votes, by the King's attempt to get rid of them. There had been no excuse for that attempt, and it was ridiculous to quote as precedents the events of 1783 and 1807; for the Whigs were doing

¹ Lyndhurst prophesied Brougham's future career of mischief-making pretty accurately to Greville (Greville, iii. 153): 'he will come down night after night and produce plans of Reform on any subject; he will make speeches two or three hours long to very thin houses, which will be printed in all the Newspapers', &c. All of this came to pass, yet it must be confessed that Brougham often did excellent work in preparing the way for innumerable law-reforms; even if he didn't carry them, *il remuait la terre*. And it is amusing to think of Lyndhurst and Brougham becoming great friends in their old age, and constantly meeting to laugh at every one else. (See Atlay's *Victorian Chancellors* (Lyndhurst, Brougham, *passim*).)

² Atlay, i. 404. Cottenham came back with the Whigs in the summer of 1846, and resigned from ill health in 1851.

well all along the line and would have done better but for the obstruction in the Lords. If William had been a wise man he would have used his influence with the Peers against this obstruction. As it was, his frequent recommendations to Melbourne and Peel to effect a coalition were worth just nothing.

With the exception of Palmerston at the Foreign Office none of the Whig Ministers of 1835 were distinguished, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Spring Rice, came dangerously near to being a failure. The worst feature in the situation was that the 'Irish vote', for the first, but not the last, time in history, was one of the possible sources of Government strength in the Commons. No one now doubts that there was some regular compact between O'Connell and Ministers, though both frequently denied it, and though there is no evidence of any personal communication either by word or letter between the Premier and the Irish leader.¹ The Government set its face against the aggressive 'Orange Lodges' and got them dispersed in 1836; it introduced the paid 'residential' magistrates, whose admirable work has been so charmingly illustrated by two ladies in our own day;² and it enlisted Catholics in large numbers in the constabulary. Melbourne genuinely wished to make Emancipation a real thing, and gave many places in the Irish Government to Catholics. It has been asked whether he might not have 'bought' O'Connell himself by giving him high legal office; whether he did make such offer, and, if so, why O'Connell refused it.

There is no finality in the judgements of history, but Lecky's estimate of the character and work of O'Connell would be difficult to upset—'if he had ceased agitation when Emancipation was won he would have been as great as Washington.' He was in advance of his Irish contem-

¹ Melbourne, often indiscreet in talk and even in letters, wrote to Russell as recently as August 1834, 'the Ministry that lets O'Connell get into the saddle may be very sure that he will soon have a bit in their mouths and guide them as he pleases'. (*Melbourne Papers*, 211.)

² *Some Experiences of an Irish R. M.* (and other works) by E. Æ. Somerville and 'Martin Ross'.

poraries in many ways, he took an unselfish interest in several great causes: though an ardent Catholic, he was quite free from intolerance; he deprecated all 'agrarian' insurrection; and he turned a very cold shoulder both to Canadian rebels and to Chartists. But he craved for adulation, would be ever in the limelight, and had to go on agitating if he was to keep in it. Irish limelight is apt to shine through Atlantic mists, until it almost resembles an *ignis fatuus*. Moreover this Proteus so constantly changed his shape that responsible Englishmen never knew how far he meant to go, or whither he would go next. Throughout his career his language was more inflammatory than his acts, and his acts than his parliamentary votes. Though he hoped to compass his ends without rebellion, he must have known that his words were continual incitements to rebellion. He was not mercenary and he died very poor, but the salary of no place that Government could offer him would have reached the £15,000 which was the average figure of a year's 'tribute', received and recklessly spent by this 'Liberator' on himself, on his family and friends, and on the advancement of his several causes. Before the retirement of Grey he had been crying out for Repeal of the Union, and had moved for a Committee to examine the results of that measure. Here he found no support from any sober Irishman, nor from any man, in or out of Parliament, of either party in Britain. If this agitation became popular with the Irish peasants (who cared not tuppence about Repeal) it was only because the agitator was their hero. Nor, in later days, did the peasants care tuppence about 'Home Rule' until Parnell combined it with an attack on landlords, which O'Connell had been too honest to do. Unquestionably, however, O'Connell began to fan the flame of hatred to England, and enjoyed fanning it. Far wiser and more honourable were his attack on Tithe,¹ and his cry for disestablishment of the Protestant,

¹ O'Connell wanted Tithe to continue, but to be devoted either to a proportional endowment of the Catholic Church, or to some charitable purpose beneficial to men of both faiths.

endowment of the Catholic, Church. It seems to have been largely the mere wording of the Act of Union ('that the Churches of England and Ireland shall remain for ever united') that prevented this last cry from finding an echo in England. When the Lords over and over again threw out the Appropriation Clause of successive Tithe Bills, O'Connell can hardly be blamed for railing against that House. And when we scold that House for its stupidity we must not forget that the Bishops, led by Phillpotts,¹ were its protagonists, and that not only Stanley and Gladstone but Peel himself supported them in the Commons.

When Melbourne re-entered office in April '35, O'Connell agreed to drop Repeal if the Government would carry the commutation of Tithe with the Appropriation Clause, reform the Irish municipalities, and give a fair proportion of places in the Irish Government to Catholics. Russell 'saw no cause to complain of Mr. O'Connell's conduct'.² Plunket as Irish Chancellor and Thomas Drummond, the Under-Secretary, heartily set themselves to carry out the third of the Liberator's demands. But, when it came to passing the first and second of these demands through Parliament, Phillpotts and Lyndhurst hopelessly blocked the way. The Tithe Bill occupied the greater part of two sessions, '35 and '36. In the end it had to be passed in '38 without the desirable clause, and Melbourne ought to have resigned rather than drop this. It was almost the same with the Irish Municipal Bill, which was riddled through and through by Lyndhurst,³ and only arrived, much battered, in port in 1840. It established a £10 franchise in ten of the more respectable towns; it abolished fifty-eight existing Corporations, and provided that any borough with 3,000 inhabitants

¹ 'He has a desperate and dreadful countenance, and looks like the man he is.' (Greville, ii. 287.)

² In the crisis of 1839 Russell wrote a letter to O'Connell acknowledging the constant and disinterested support which he had given to the Ministry. (*Life of Lord John Russell*, by Sir S. Walpole, i. 321.)

³ And, it must be added, by Peel in the Commons.

might apply to the Crown for a charter of incorporation. Irish municipal government was, no doubt, a farce before this Act, but it has been no less a farce since, and is usually managed by local publicans, who are not going to waste public money in providing water for their fellow townsmen when they can spend it in providing whisky for themselves and their friends. One of Melbourne's best schemes for Ireland, which was taken up, equally in vain, by Bentinck and Disraeli a decade later, was a network of Government railways; but Peel, who was all for private enterprise in such matters, compelled the dropping of it. If carried out, it would have done much to mitigate the horrors of the famine of 1847.

Before the Municipal Bill was through, O'Connell had begun to waver in his allegiance. He at first opposed Melbourne's Irish Poor Law Bill (1838), but dropped his opposition, without surrendering his opinion, when he found that his supporters wanted the law. He had already incurred some loss of popularity by denouncing a series of murders with which the Trade Unions of Ireland signalized their infancy. And so, in order to 'keep his end up', he turned back to his old love, Repeal, founded an association called *The Precursors*, raised a fresh tribute under the name of 'Repeal Rent', and re-enlisted the priests as his agents. Thus he directly helped to bring about in 1841 the fall of that Government which had all along been indirectly weakened by its alliance with him.

There was one Irish grievance which O'Connell strangely ignored. Lord Morris, in his *Ireland, 1798-1898*, continually points out that some legal recognition of what is known as 'tenant-right' was the most pressing of all needs. In the eighteenth century, if landlords did nothing to improve their farms, they at least never evicted their farmers, and a tacit recognition of dual ownership had grown up, which in Ulster amounted to a 'custom' recognized by the Law Courts. When, after 1829, the votes of the peasantry were no longer needed, consolidation and improvement of farms began (though on no large scale before 1849), and were

necessarily accompanied by evictions of unthrifty and backward farmers, without compensation for any improvements they or their ancestors might have made. Perhaps at the end of his career O'Connell's eyes were opening to this hardship. Unfortunately, English economic opinion ran the other way, towards raising the relation of landlord and tenant in Ireland into an honest commercial bargain, such as it was in England, in order to promote the prosperity of the country. Disraeli perceived the grievance, and intended to relieve it, in 1852, but fell before he could tackle it; and when at last it was taken up by Gladstone in 1871, the Bill then passed (with the best intentions) was so cumbrous as to prove unworkable.

Melbourne would probably have been driven from office before the end of 1837, if the death of the old King¹ in June had not put the crown on the head of his niece, who had just come of age. The scene in the early summer morning at Kensington Palace has often been painted, often described; seldom better than by her who was the central figure in it.

'Tuesday, 20th June. I was awoke at 6 o'clock by Mamma, who told me that the Archbishop of Canterbury and Lord Conyngham were here and wished to see me. I got out of bed and went into my sitting room (only in my dressing gown) and *alone* and saw them. Lord Conyngham [the Lord Chamberlain] then acquainted me that my poor uncle the King was no more and had expired at 12 minutes p. 2 this morning and consequently that I am *Queen*. . . . Since it has pleased Providence to place me in this station, I shall do my utmost to fulfil my duty towards my country. . . . At 9 came Lord Melbourne whom I saw in my room and of COURSE *quite* ALONE as I shall *always* do all my ministers.'² Victoria was fond, both in this

¹ 'You know I can't give any dinners without inviting the Ministers and I would rather see the Devil than any of them in my house,' said William in June 1835. (Greville, iii. 265.)

² *The Girlhood of Queen Victoria. A selection from Her Majesty's Diaries between the years 1832 and 1840*, edited by Viscount Esher, 1912, i. 196-7.

unique *Journal* and in the numerous and fluent, if occasionally ungrammatical, letters which she poured out to her uncle Leopold of Belgium and others, of underlining important words; it was the fashion of the day, a mark of 'sensibility' (a little German, perhaps, in origin), which the Queen never wholly lost. But if, in this most royal woman, there was to be a dash of Sensibility it hardly affected at all the solid bed-rock of her Sense; from the beginning to the end of her long life the *Elinor* in her entirely outweighed the *Marianne*.

Lord Esher, in his introduction to the book just quoted, frankly states that the Queen's education 'had not been of an exceptionally high order'. Its standard, one feels, had been that of Miss Pinkerton's Academy at Chiswick, or of those small German courts in which mild accomplishments, dullness, and a stiff etiquette were endemic. Victoria lacked imagination and lacked intellectual curiosity, nor did she ever take pleasure in picking the brains of persons more cultured than herself. Yet, in the long list of ministers who served her, the only two whom she really loved (it is not too strong a word) were the two most highly endowed with intellectual imagination, Melbourne and Disraeli. Lord Esher rightly pitches upon a 'robust equilibrium of mind' as the Queen's great and eminently English characteristic: 'while she could recognize intellect and capacity, her sympathies were with average people, whose feelings and opinions she more readily understood and in reality represented.' Her religious views were wholly in accordance with those of this class of her subjects, and were based on a dry inexpansive Protestantism. It was the same with her taste in art and letters; she cared little for great literature, and it may be doubted whether she knew much of the history of her country. Her illogical belief in her own 'divine' right to the throne seemed to her compatible with a sentimental interest in the story of Mary Stuart and her descendants, and with a hearty dislike^m of the greatest of her own predecessors, Elizabeth.

The 'Melbourne idyll' has often been described, and

I may perhaps be forgiven if I quote from my own account of it written in another place.¹ 'The duty which now fell to Melbourne was one which he was supremely fitted to perform, a duty which no living Englishman, perhaps no Englishman that ever lived, could have performed so well—that of being the political tutor and confidential friend of the young Queen. Even at his first interview she noticed that he twice kissed her hand. Somewhat later Greville wrote: "I have no doubt he is passionately fond of her, as he might be of his daughter if he had one, and the more because he is a man with a capacity for loving without having anything in the world to love." She was eighteen and he was fifty-eight, but he, like Lord Carteret, was perennially young, and the three and a half years of their friendship were perhaps her only real "youth". She loved him like a father; indeed he was the only father she ever knew; he came to love her like his daughter, but without ever forgetting that she was his Queen. He spoke to her with astonishing frankness on every conceivable subject, and much upon her own conduct and duty. He chid her often, but in so charming a fashion that she would rather be chidden by him than flattered by all the world; when he was absent she was desolated, and fed even upon his official and ministerial letters. She chid him too, with sweet playfulness and with seriousness, for not going to church, for his good-humoured cynicism, for a thousand other things. Greville thought it wonderful that Melbourne should have put himself under the restraint of conforming to the stiff etiquette of the Court, and that he could check his habit of "interlarding his conversation with frequent damns", but there is no evidence in the *Journal* that he felt such restraint, or that he used strong language in her presence.² Throughout this idyll, or two-character drama,

¹ *Historical Portraits*, iv. 219.

² Once indeed long afterwards, according to Greville, on Jan. 13, 1846, on Peel's *volte-face* on the Corn Laws, Melbourne, dining at Windsor, broke out with, 'Ma'am, it's a damned dishonest act'; the Queen only laughed, and tried to quiet him. (Greville, v. 351.)

the reader is always made to feel the shadow of the coming tragedy, when the fatherly mentor must quit the beloved pupil. The last words of the Queen's *Journal* are, "I and Albert alone". Lord Melbourne had not made the marriage, but no word of disapproval crossed his lips. Though he remained Minister for another year his life-work was done. The Prince Consort was unaffectedly glad to see him go. Melbourne declined all honours and rewards, even the Garter. We may well believe that he carried with him into his retirement an aching void in his heart.'

This marriage with her cousin, Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, was in fact made for the Queen by the wisest relative she had, Leopold of Belgium. It was suggested in 1836, and the cousins became acquainted on Albert's first visit to England in that year. So far back as June 1833, Palmerston¹ had written: 'We have a flight of German Princes come over to us, but Princess Victoria is hardly old enough as yet to make it worth their while to come.' Another possible candidate, favoured by Uncle William, had been one of the Orange Princes. Melbourne had been quite opposed to this, but in February 1838 he also was afraid that 'Mamma had intentions'; which, says the Queen, 'she certainly had'. Leopold disliked Mamma almost as much as William IV had disliked her. Once the young lady told her Minister that she would prefer to remain always single; at other times she pleaded (and here he agreed with her) that there was 'no hurry'. But there were few eligible Princes in Europe, and the Queen did not therefore complicate matters when, on his second visit in 1839, she fell genuinely in love with her destined husband, 'who is really quite charming and so excessively handsome, such beautiful blue eyes, an exquisite nose, and such a pretty mouth with delicate 'moustachios, and slight, but very slight, whiskers: a beautiful figure, broad in the shoulders and a fine waist'. No young lady properly brought up *à la* Pinkerton could have avoided falling in love with such

¹ Dalling, ii. 164.

a beau.¹ Luckily the Prince had solid and even noble qualities which compensated for this fascinating exterior. Throughout his short life he had both the highest conception of his duty and the most unswerving devotion to it. His education, carefully superintended by Uncle Leopold and by Leopold's friend, Baron Stockmar, had gone far beyond that of ordinary Kings and Princes. He would have carried off, year after year, the 'good-boy prize' in any school in Europe. He was always going through 'courses of reading and study'. He would have been placed high in the Second Class by any set of examiners in any University examination. He would have been an ideal Principal of some newly-founded Provincial University. 'His aptitude for business was wonderful, his study of politics unremitting.' If anything he was rather too much of an Admirable Crichton, and it is therefore much to his credit that he did not often attempt to use his rare gifts, and his unbounded influence over his wife, for any unconstitutional purpose.² He set himself from the first to be her chief secretary and her 'permanent Minister'.

The Prince was to prove a model chairman at charity meetings, and at the meetings held to inaugurate the Great Exhibition of 1851. He set himself sternly against the slightest laxity of conduct or speech in his *entourage*. Under his influence royalty, which had no doubt been somewhat

¹ *Journal*, ii. 263. Perhaps because he was such a beau, he was also something of a tailor. *Punch's* gibes at his passion for uniforms are familiar to all readers of Mr. Graves's charming compilation, *Mr. Punch's History of Modern England*.

² The Prince's period of greatest unpopularity was during the Crimean War. Early in 1854 there was a series of attacks on him in the newspapers, both on account of his 'Germanism' (and especially his exaggerated deference to Austria) and his interference with Army appointments. There was a good deal of truth in both accusations; Lord Aberdeen once told Greville (in 1849, vi. 297) that Albert's views were 'generally sound and wise with one exception, his violent and incorrigible Germanism. He goes all lengths with Prussia; will not hear of the moderate federalism based on the Treaty of Vienna and the old relations of Germany; and insists on a new German Empire with the King of Prussia at its head.' *Vid. infr.* p. 301.

too 'human' since the days of Charles II, put on new trappings and ceased to be merely the apex of 'Society with a big S'. The *Court Circular* was invented, and the Queen's subjects were able to learn that she frequently walked on the slopes at Windsor. It pleased them to learn this, and pleased them still more to learn that she attended divine service, to read daily who was Lord-in-Waiting, who had the honour of dining at the Castle, who was received in the royal circle afterwards. Royalty in fact ought to be 'awful', and it became so. After 1861, during the forty years of widowhood which lay before her, Victoria, in her passionate devotion to Albert's memory, even exaggerated this aloofness. 'The effect', says Lord Esher, speaking of Windsor, 'was that of a shrine.' Grave men walked 'softly through the rooms and no voice was ever raised . . . the air was rarified by a feeling that somewhere, in a region unvisited by any but the most highly privileged, was seated, not in an ordinary arm-chair but on a throne, the awe-inspiring and ever-dignified figure of the Sovereign. . . . How rarely the Queen extended her hand! it was a great privilege, and only on special occasions vouchsafed to her Ministers. Men and women bent very low to kiss that hand.' ¹

Much of this, however, was in the distant future, and meanwhile Melbourne's Government had got to live. It was certainly not favoured by fortune. A series of 'bad years', cold summers, poor harvests, lasted till 1842. Trade was sinking deeper and deeper into depression and wages were falling with it.² The old financial system, resting on indirect

¹ Preface to *Journal*.

² Ebenezer Elliott's song, to the tune of *Robin Adair*, has true pathos in it:

Father clamm'd thrice a week,
 God's will be done;
 Long for work did he seek,
 Work he found none;
 Tears on his hollow cheek
 Told what no tongue can speak;
 Why did his master break?
 God's will be done.

taxation, had been undermined by the steps towards Free-trade inaugurated by Huskisson, and was now giving way altogether. Melbourne had to accustom himself to unbalanced national books, and to an annual deficit which at last reached two and a half millions (1840-1). All this led to serious and legitimate discontent, manifested on one side by the Anti-Corn-Law League and on the other by the Chartists. Add to these a rebellion in Canada, destined to lead to a reconstruction of our Colonial system, and a disaster of the first magnitude in India. Such difficulties were enough to try any Government, and that Melbourne's lasted as long as it did was due to the comparative forbearance of the Opposition in the Commons (there was no forbearance in the Lords); and this forbearance was due to the peculiar temper of Sir Robert Peel. Peel has never received sufficient praise for refusing to play the party game during these years.¹ When he supported the measures of the Whigs he did so because he thought those measures were for the good of the country; his baser contemporaries thought he was merely giving the Whigs rope with which to hang themselves. A parallel might be advantageously drawn between Peel and Oliver Cromwell: each lacked extensive foresight and originality of ideas: each was keenly receptive of the ideas of more imaginative minds: each brooded long before he could bring himself to translate

Elliott is best known as the author of the beautiful hymn:

When wilt thou save the People, Lord,
Not Crowns or thrones, but men?

He, like Bamford, believed in a 'golden age' (down to 1760), and he has no quarrel with the old squire-landowners; it is the newly enriched manufacturers, who have bought out the yeomen and got Enclosure Acts passed since 1760, that he hates; he expects, and would almost welcome, a bloody solution of the Corn-law problem. But his famous *Corn-law Rhymes* are really the weakest of his verses, as his *Village Patriarch* is the best. (E. Elliott, *Poetical Works*, 1840, and subsequent editions and additions to 1850.)

¹ Let any unprejudiced person try to picture to himself how Disraeli or Gladstone, had they then been in Peel's place, would have played it.

these ideas into practice and to face the necessary changes: then each suddenly saw his way illuminated for him, and, when he saw it, acted swiftly, boldly, and without counting the cost. Therefore each has been accused of 'opportunism'.

Melbourne lost many English votes at the Election which followed the Queen's accession, but, though he thought 'O'Connell's love only less dangerous than his hate', the Irish and Scottish members were pretty solid for him. In 1838 he offered O'Connell the Mastership of the Irish Rolls; O'Connell liked to coquet with such offers, but ended by refusing. After several hairbreadth escapes, the Ministry, being almost beaten on a Jamaica Bill (to compel that colony to behave respectably to its emancipated slaves), resigned, and Peel for a moment came in in 1839. Russell told Hobhouse that the Queen cried bitterly when she first heard that the Whigs had to resign, and would not come downstairs that evening.¹ When, however, Peel demanded, perhaps with too little tact, that the Queen should dismiss one or two 'Whig' ladies from the 'Bedchamber' offices about her court, the Queen unexpectedly refused. Peel, thereupon, far too hastily, resigned, and Melbourne, who had supported his mistress's more natural than strictly 'constitutional' attitude, came back again weaker than ever.² He made some slight changes in his Cabinet. Russell, always as ready to assume any responsibility as to lay it down, took the Colonies, *vice* Lord Glenelg, who was always asleep; Baring succeeded Rice at the Exchequer, and Macaulay, who had recently returned from a seat on the Indian Council, found himself in the singularly unsuitable office of Secretary-at-War. Two deaths of his dearest friends—Lord Egremont³ in 1838 and Lord Holland in

¹ Broughton, *Recollections*, v. 193.

² 'Nobody thinks I *want* to stay, do they?' (*Melbourne Papers*, 390.) Wellington, much to the disgust of his own party, upheld Melbourne.

³ I do not suppose that any one will ever know whether Melbourne and his sister, Lady Palmerston, were really Lord Egremont's children or no. It was certainly believed by their whole generation of society that they were.

1840—wrenched the tender heart-strings of the Prime Minister; but it was John Russell who in 1841, not for the first or last time, was destined to 'upset the coach' by a sudden veer in the direction of more free admission of foreign corn and sugar. The Government was handsomely beat, dissolved Parliament, and was still more handsomely beat at the Election which placed Sir Robert Peel in power with a majority of ninety-one.¹

The record of the Whigs, if we take it all round, had been a fine one. Remember how critical were the years during which they had held office. The Reform Bill, which was to give us Lecky's 'best constitution that ever existed', had frightened the very men who had forced it through, and their fears of democracy did not easily subside. These fears were by no means groundless: if the small knot of 'philosophic Radicals' effected little in Parliament, they affected Public Opinion a great deal. They inspired the movement for Free-trade, admirable in itself but revolutionary in its results. They inspired the cry for colonial self-government, if not that for cutting the painter of the Colonies altogether. They called for secret voting at elections, for a speedy widening of the franchise, for the disestablishment of the Church. To a certain extent they inspired the Chartists themselves. Now the Whigs, although they, or their so-called 'Liberal' successors, were afterwards 'converted' to some of these things, set themselves against yielding to any of them merely on account of popular clamour; and perhaps their real service to the country lay not so much in the great measures they passed as in their admirable handling of 'sedition, privy conspiracy, and rebellion'.

The Canadian Rebellion was the least dangerous of the events they had to handle. Charles Grant, Colonial Secretary as Lord Glenelg from 1835, was the man of whom Brougham said: 'I am sure that it [the Rebellion] must

¹ It was only a few weeks before this that Mr. Barnes, the Editor of *The Times*, died suddenly, and was succeeded by John Delane, a young Irishman of twenty-four.

have cost my noble friend many a sleepless day,'¹ and under him the Colonies were governed by a few clerks in Downing Street, of whom James Stephen was chief. No attempt had been made to establish any real link between them and the Mother-Country, and little disputes were brewing with nearly every one of them. Nobody between Adam Smith and Disraeli had suggested their representation in Parliament, and Huskisson had overlooked, as Peel was to overlook, the opportunity of binding the Empire together by a regular set of tariffs in favour of the Colonies.² Nor was there, on the part of the colonists, any of that 'willingness to co-operate as yet unclothed in legal form',³ which keeps them at our side to-day.

In South Africa it was already the double question of race, white *versus* black or brown (Bushman, Hottentot, or Kaffir), and white Dutch *versus* white British:⁴ the first Dutch 'trek' or secession into the interior, beyond the Orange River, began in 1836.

In Australia and Tasmania the grievance was transporta-

¹ Sir H. Taylor, *Autobiography*, i. 147.

² Canadian timber was, indeed, admitted at a preferential tariff till the doctrinaires of 1860 removed the preference.

³ A. D. Lindsay, in Marvin, *A Century of Hope*, 173.

⁴ When we took over the Cape in 1806 it had a white population of about 20,000, a black or brown of about ten times as many; and of these the Kaffirs, of Bantu stock, were really warlike. The early history of the Colony is marked by a series of Kaffir wars, during which our frontier steadily advanced eastwards and north-eastwards. The Zulus were a still more warlike branch of the same Bantu race. The 'Great Trek' was undertaken mainly because successive British governors insisted on decent treatment of the native races, and on emancipation of slaves. The trek at first extended over the Drakensberg range into Natal, where British were attacked by Boers in 1842; after the Boer repulse there, the trekkers gradually receded into the interior, and spread themselves northwards across the Vaal. In 1852 and 1854 the British Government recognized the independence of the 'Orange Free State' and the 'Transvaal', so far as their internal affairs were concerned, and it was not till the terrible menace from the Zulus developed into a danger for all white colonists, about the year 1876, that this arrangement was upset.

tion of criminals, against which a parliamentary committee had reported in 1837.¹

¹ The early history of Australia is really one of expansion outwards from Sydney, New South Wales, in search of fresh pasture lands; first southwards towards Bass's Strait, northwards towards the densely timbered hills of what is now Queensland, westwards over the mountains to the valleys of the Murray and its great tributaries. There was no regular settlement of Victoria till 1835-6, when the district behind Melbourne was invaded by an overflow of flock-masters from Tasmania. Queensland begins to have a history at Moreton Bay in 1823-4, West Australia on the Swan River and King George's Sound, in 1829. The last settlement which was destined to grow into a separate colony was that of South Australia, about 1835, whose capital recalls the name of William IV's Queen. Thus, at the accession of Queen Victoria, the nucleus of the five Continental States, and of the island Colony of Tasmania (officially separated from New South Wales in 1825), was already in being. When the first grant of representative institutions was made in 1842, Queensland and Victoria were still included in New South Wales; by 1860 all the States except West Australia were reckoned separate Colonies and had been given responsible government. The development of the whole was, however, slow until the first discoveries of gold in 1851; then the population trebled itself in a decade. Transportation to Tasmania ceased in 1846, and by Acts of 1853 and 1857 it was entirely abolished in all Colonies, penal servitude in the Home Country taking its place. Aotearoa (i.e. the 'Long White Cloud', which is its beautiful Maori name), or New Zealand, was only just struggling into existence at the end of Melbourne's ministry. The ship *Tory*, with the first company of emigrants for it, started on May 1st, 1839. There was no birth-stain of transportation on it, no conflict between two white races. With a delightful climate, and with the only race of pure 'savages' which has proved itself capable of absorbing European civilization without losing its old virility, this 'Britain of the South Seas' has had a happier history than any of our Colonies. Captain Cook had once annexed it to the Crown—which indignantly spurned the burden; and it was a sort of no-man's-land for Europeans until the persistence of Edward Gibbon Wakefield in the late thirties at last forced Melbourne to send out a Governor in 1840. The Maori chiefs, magnificent warlike fellows, agreed by treaty to put themselves under the Queen's suzerainty; the wise first Governorship of Sir George Grey, 1845-53, tided the infant Colony over its most difficult times, and, when he was transferred to the Cape, responsible government was granted. Maori wars were still to come—from 1861 to 1871 there was a regular series of such wars—but from their close its prosperity has been uninterrupted.

In Canada the issues at stake at the Queen's accession were more strictly 'constitutional', though the racial question was also burning. They turned on the relation between the elective 'Houses of Assembly' and the Legislative Councils and Governors who were directly responsible to the Crown. This rested on that Act of 1791 which had provoked the wrath of Burke against 'experiments in government'. The inhabitants of Lower Canada, with the old capitals at Quebec and Montreal, were all of French descent, and of French pre-Revolutionary temper; backward, ignorant, Catholic, they objected to the 'pushful' British, who were rapidly outstripping them in wealth and swallowing all the waste lands. The nominated Council in this Lower Province (now Quebec), and both Council and Assembly in the Upper (now Ontario), were wholly British, while the Assembly in the Lower was wholly French. One-seventh of all the unoccupied land in both Provinces had been set aside for the endowment of the Protestant Church; another seventh was 'reserved' for the Crown, and William IV had obstinately refused to part with an acre of his seventh, or to modify any clause of the Act of 1791. If the Americans took no direct hand in fomenting discontent in Canada, it was well known that they confidently looked forward to the future absorption of all British North America within their Union, and they certainly encouraged a constant stream of re-emigration, from both Canadian Provinces, to their own more temperate zone.

Meanwhile the Canadian Assemblies demanded control, not only of the direct taxes raised in the Colony (this had been granted in 1831), but of the whole revenue, including the Customs; and, when this was refused, the Assembly of the Lower Province stopped supplies for several successive years, their leader being a French-Canadian named Papineau, who had once been Speaker, and who was now unquestionably playing for independence. Melbourne sent out Commissioners to investigate the complaints, but with little effect. In the spring of 1837 the Lower Province put forward a threat of war, and its Assembly was at once dissolved by the Governor. There were riots and, after the example

of Boston in 1774, 'non-importation agreements'. From 1835 Papineau had been in conference with Mackenzie, an ex-journalist of Toronto and an advanced Radical leader in the Upper Province. Each prepared to raise a standard of rebellion and to demand a 'National Convention' of both Provinces. When, however, Mackenzie precipitated matters and raised the standard, Papineau fled to the United States, and Mackenzie's outbreak was quickly put down by (Sir) Francis Head and the militia. In neither Province had the rebel appeal to arms any serious success. Mackenzie followed Papineau into exile and got into trouble with the American Government for attempting filibustering expeditions against Canada.

The whole thing might have been forgotten but for its results. In February 1838, Parliament having suspended the Constitution of Lower Canada for three years, Melbourne made the curious selection of that advanced Radical Durham¹ to go out as Governor-General of all British North America, and as Special Commissioner, to put an end to the late troubles. Vain, irritable, and tactless as Durham was, he yet possessed three great qualities, foresight, courage, and wisdom in the choice of his subordinates. He reached Quebec in May and at once proceeded to strike right and left, careless whether or no he were exceeding his instructions; you want a man who *will* do such things, sometimes. He certainly exceeded his instructions when he arbitrarily transported to Bermuda (to the great disgust of that loyal little island) a few of the leaders in the rebellion, and when he condemned to death in absence about twice as many, who had fled to the United States. But, on the other hand, he made a clean sweep of all the 'Tories' on the temporary Legislative (really an Executive) Council, which had been appointed *ad interim* by the late Governor, he appointed

¹ Greville constantly harps on the love of the Radical party for Durham because he was an earl: 'they are wild to have a lord for their leader, and must have that lord who is the especial incarnation of all those odious qualities which they ascribe most unjustly to the order of which he is a member.' (iv. 54, 55, 143, &c.)

five members of his own staff to take their places, and he proclaimed an amnesty to the remaining insurgents. The Home Government could hardly avoid disavowing these high-handed acts and recalling their author. The recall was really against Melbourne's wish. 'I dislike him so much,' wrote the Prime Minister to Russell, October 21, 1838,¹ 'that there is no course that would please me so well as setting him at defiance, but when I consider the state of the Colony, and the feeling of the English [Radical] party now rallying round him, and when I recollect that I am accused of not having supported him, I feel it to be absolutely necessary that I should do nothing to prevent his remaining' [sc. in Canada].

Durham, however, on hearing that he was to be disavowed, had anticipated his recall and sailed for England² in the sulks, appealing against the Home Government to the Canadian people and actually proclaiming a *general* amnesty. On his return he refused for some time to have any intercourse with the Ministry. He boasted that he had put down the Rebellion and was greeted on landing with the news that the Upper Province had broken out again. The second outbreak was even less serious than the first, and was suppressed with perfect ease by Sir John Colborne (Lord Seaton) of Waterloo fame, whom Durham had left as acting Governor. The outcome of the whole matter was the presentation by Durham of a voluminous Report,³ in compiling which he had received valuable assistance from his secretary Charles Buller, from Sir W. Molesworth and Edward Gibbon Wakefield, in favour of a Union of the two Provinces, with a small nominated Legislative Council and an elective Lower House, which should control all finance, and to which all officials except the Governor should be responsible. After some delay most of this plan was accepted

¹ *Melbourne Papers*, 434.

² He spent only five months in Canada.

³ The Report was printed in *The Times* before being laid on the table of either House; Durham pretended surprise at this, but he had been giving away copies right and left. (Greville, iv. 133.)

by the Home Government (1840). In 1839 Mr. Poulett-Thomson, afterwards Lord Sydenham, was sent out as Governor to prepare the way for the new Constitution. Within three years all had begun to work smoothly, and eventually the leading rebels were permitted to return and were pardoned. After the serious conflagration caused by the oil which Durham had poured on the fire of rebellion, it says much for the Ministers that they put out the fire, and began to rebuild the house, on the plans drawn up by the incendiary himself. Further portions of Durham's Report were utilized when a Federation of the whole of British North America was created in 1867. Moreover, the Report became, as we shall see, the basis of self-government for all our greater Colonies.

No less successful was the Government's handling of the far more serious trouble caused by the Chartist. 'The People's Charter' has a whole literature of its own, the most famous being perhaps Thomas Cooper's *Life written by himself*. There are also excellent lights from inside in Holyoake's *Sixty Years of an Agitator's Life*, and Alexander Somerville's *Autobiography of a Working Man*. Francis Place began to write a *History of Chartism*, which remains a huge *torso* manuscript in the British Museum. Robert Gammage, who was a member of the abortive 'National Convention' of 1839, published in 1854 a solid volume called *History of the Chartist Movement*. The fairest account that I have met is that by a young student of the University of Manchester, Mark Hovell, who gave his life for his country on the Somme in 1916. After his death the book was completed and edited by Professor Tout (1918). I have used it as my main authority in what follows.

There were many distinct elements in the movement, but there was little of what we now call 'Socialism',¹ though some of the most honest leaders, notably William Lovett, held some Communistic doctrines. It was Lovett who, with some help from Place, drew the actual Charter in 1838.

¹ The word is first found (in English) in 1833 in the sense of 'Owenite'.

Others had begun life as 'Owenites', i.e. followers of Robert Owen, whose *New View of Society* had been published in 1813. Owen was a man of the purest character and loftiest ideals, who had succeeded in making even a cotton-mill (at New Lanark, 1800-29) a human place, had cared much for his workmen, and had been repaid both by their devotion and by his own financial success. He firmly believed that character could be moulded by environment, and, being a dull and prosy talker, and harping on this continually, he was described as 'a man of one idea', 'but', says the shrewd Mr. Holyoake, who knew Owen only in his old age, 'I never shared this objection to people of one idea, having known so many who had none'.¹ *Inter alia* Owen was the pioneer of co-operation in industry; labour should be organized to work in co-operative associations for its own profit; he would have covered the world with self-supporting 'cities of industry' (real 'garden-cities' too, both in the moral and the physical sense). He had a perfect temper, and, though of very humble birth, was a perfect gentleman. In politics he was, if anything, a Tory, and he put no faith in political reform. His success down to 1829, and the courting of his person by influential well-wishers from every country in Europe, seem to have turned his head; his avowed, though very gentle, antagonism to all forms of religion alienated many of his friends, and at last he became mainly an unpractical dreamer, if often of very absurd,² often also of very noble, dreams. His actual influence on Chartism was indirect, but he bequeathed hope and humanity to any one who would pick up such gifts. The Chartist leaders themselves were more practical, more political. Yet without the great increase of social distress between 1825 and 1842 they would have been but beating the air. Distress was acute during the first five years of the Queen's reign, though the fall in wages had been going on ever since Waterloo.

¹ *Sixty Years*, i. 119.

² Late in life he wanted to abolish money: once he called religion, marriage, and private property, the 'Trinity of evil'. (Lecky, *Dem. and Lib.*, ii. 218.)

To make all men happy for ever by an Act of Parliament had been the ideal of several people before the Chartists, and no one could say that it wasn't a noble ideal. Much of the Chartist movement was a belated echo of the voices of the 'men of '93' in France. Nor could any one deny that there was much truth in the preamble to the Charter, which began thus:—'We live in a land of rich soil and wholesome temperature, famous for enterprising merchants and industrious workmen, excelling all others in means of internal communication and in harbours, abundantly furnished with materials for manufacture. For twenty-three years we have enjoyed profound peace. Yet we are overwhelmed with public and private suffering, traders are on the verge of bankruptcy, and workmen are starving,' &c. Democracy has, in fact, a way of presenting truths undeniable from a logical standpoint, but its weakness in this country has always lain in proposing mainly political, not social, remedies; and the political changes which have taken place since 1832 seem rather to have aggravated than allayed the discontents. Perhaps after all there is some truth in Henry Maine's dictum 'the more conditions are ameliorated, the more they are declared to be intolerable'. Those of 1839 certainly read as pretty 'intolerable' to us in 1923. When between 1833 and 1850 the conditions of labour were revealed to Parliament by Lord Ashley, Mr. Fielden, and others, the most honest horror was at once expressed, and legislation was at once directed against them; against child labour, female labour, long hours, poisonous atmospheres, truck, butties,¹ and the like. Yet such legislation was too often timid and hesitating. Every Bill, however

¹ A 'Butty' was a middleman who rented a coal- or iron-mine from its proprietors, engaged the workmen, and found them tools, and often kept a 'truck-shop', where he paid them in groceries, or drink, or 'waistcoats' at extravagant prices—in anything but money. 'Sir,' said Mr. Nixon, 'this here age wants a great deal, but what it principally wants is to have its wages paid in current coin of the realm.' (*Sybil*, iii. 1.) He who refused to deal at the truck-shop would be dismissed at once. There was an Act against truck in 1831, but it was easily evaded.

boldly drafted, was 'watered down'; Ashley in his Diary constantly complains of the 'timidity' even of those statesmen who gave effect to his principles. Hardly before 1874 can we say that all factories were brought under reasonable control.¹ And no legislation could touch the 'domestic industries', which were even more cruelly exploited by middlemen than was the labour of factory-hands by overseers. When 'a penny an hour for a seventy-hour week' was not an uncommon wage for a hand-loom stocking-weaver, who had to rent his loom from a middleman, such a weaver was apt to cry out against the New Poor Law. The Chartists hated this law only a little less than they hated the New Police² and the Anti-Corn-Law League.

The last they hated, not from reasonable fear that the country might one day depend on foreign food, but because it was a 'middle-class movement', promoted by their bitter enemies the manufacturers. Vengeance on the middle class, which 'having got its ten-pound vote in 1832 is indifferent to our sufferings', was a potent mainspring of Chartism. There had been little class-hatred among the earlier Radicals, and that is why men like Cartwright and Bamford stand out above their successors in the cry for political reform. Yet in the 'Six Points of the People's Charter' there was little that could not be found in Cartwright's pamphlets as early as 1782. 'Annual Parliaments' we saw in 1820 to be a foolish cry. The gift of the ballot was a grievous blunder, for it destroyed the voter's responsibility. Universal suffrage has led straight to the political anarchy of our own day; the franchise ought to be the reward for education and for service to the community. Payment of members means that politics becomes a trade, and the most dangerous of all trades. The repeal of the Act of Anne, which made a property qualification necessary for a seat in Parliament, was the one entirely reasonable and admirable among the Six Points; it was also the earliest (1858) to be

¹ *Vid. infra*, p. 169, note 1.

² Introduced permissively into the counties by Act of 1839, but not universally adopted till 1856.

won ; the Act had constantly been evaded, often by the most ludicrous fictions. Equal Electoral Districts was also reasonable, but it did not accord with the principle of the old English parliaments, which were representations of localities and interests, not of numbers. The Charter further proposed that three months' residence should give a vote to all adult males, that each constituency should be rearranged after each census, and that all elections should be held on the same day. One admirable minor point was that canvassing should be punished by imprisonment, to which I would move an amendment in favour of penal servitude for life.

The first steps were taken by the ' London Working Men's Association ', founded by Place and Lovett in 1836. This began to petition Parliament for most of the Six Points, and to send out missionaries to the North of England. In Manchester these missionaries came across another new idea, that of a single ' Grand National Trade Union ', which was to enforce its will by a ' General Strike '. The two streams of thought, if they never quite blended, ran for some time in a common channel. The ' Birmingham Political Union ', of Reform Bill fame, was also revived by Attwood in 1837. Enter to these three elements Fergus O'Connor, a hot-headed Irishman of good (old-rebel) family. He founded and owned the most successful, and the most scurrilous, Chartist newspaper, the *Northern Star*, published at Leeds from 1837 ; for several years he made it pay him and pay him well.¹ Enter also James Bronterre O'Brien,² a man of some learning, educated at one of those strange schools founded by Miss Edgeworth's father. Then there was Vincent, printer's compositor and famous orator ; and

¹ Hovell is most severe on O'Connor's degradation of the press ; ' the tone of the *Star* is a melancholy tribute to the low level of its readers.' O'Connor employed and paid Chartist leaders to be its reporters and to garble their reports ; ' it was Tammany Hall in embryo.'

² Gammage tells us that O'Brien ' could reason in a speech, which few Chartists could ' ; yet even O'Brien declared that the National Debt had doubled since 1815.

Harney, 'who wanted to be thought like Marat', and dressed for the part. There were lesser Chartists, too, of whom one would like to learn something, one with the remarkable name of Lightowler, another, who apparently could not spell his own, called Hanniball. There was 'the Reverend the Rector of Warwick, qualified because he railed at the corruptions of the Church, of which he was, however, a non-resident sinecurist'; and there was that remarkable (but unidentified) political publican mentioned by Somerville¹ 'who was not satisfied with the borough of Marybone, nor with London, nor with England, nor with the World, nor with Heaven, nor with Hell'.

None of these elements got on well together: indeed the language which they applied to each other beats anything they applied to their opponents; one Chartist would shout to another at a meeting, 'Avaunt, Hell-fiend'; O'Connor called O'Brien 'a starved viper'.² O'Connor and Place were always bitter enemies. By 1840 Place, who was at least practical, had begun to despair of the whole lot, for when he gave cool advice he was merely called a 'rascally Whig', and he never forgave the Chartists their opposition to Free-trade. He never understood the Northerners, though, in a letter to Cobden,³ he admitted their capacity for joint action to be superior to that of the London working-men. All Chartists were disappointed at the lukewarm support they got from the Radical group in Parliament, yet they could generally rely on forty or fifty votes on a division in the Commons. The notion of a petition to the Queen in person (1837) had to be given up because some gold-stick or other said that the petitioners must attend in Court dress!⁴

The Charter, however, when printed (May 1838) rapidly made the tour of England, and was enthusiastically received

¹ *Autobiogr.* 414.

² Gammage, 274.

³ March 4, 1840.

⁴ Oh Courtiers and Chamberlains! oh tailors and trimmings! oh buttons and bootjacks! for what have ye not got to answer? Would Elizabeth have made a pother about Court dress if any of her subjects had wanted to present a petition to her?

in the North. Elections to a 'National Convention' were held in September, and the ideas of a Monster Petition and a General Strike 'caught on'. The latter was to be called 'a sacred month', in imitation of the secession of the Roman *plebs* to the *Mons Sacer*, and was fixed for August 1839. Lancashire and Yorkshire from the first leaned towards 'physical force', i.e. armed rebellion; Birmingham and London, while quarrelling vigorously *inter se*, talked about 'moral force'. O'Connor shouted with the largest mob, whichever it was, and called the moral-force men bad names; but whenever suggestions were made that he should lead a physical-force column he usually discovered that he had 'business in Ireland'. There were monster meetings in several Northern cities, often by torch-light, and inflammatory programmes; several factories were set on fire.

Fifty-three delegates had been elected to the Convention, which met in London in February 1839, but not all of these attended. The second meeting was held in Bolt Court off Fleet Street (oh holy shade of Dr. Johnson!). In Gammage's book is a picture of the first meeting, said to be taken 'from a scarce engraving'. The dress of 1839 did not lend any outward aspect of ferocity to these fervid Revolutionists; a more smug, middle-class-looking group, with tight trousers and side-whiskers, it would be difficult to imagine. For what purpose they had met, the delegates hardly knew; soon, however, they decided that they were at least 'a General Convention of the Industrial Classes met to watch over the National Petition and to obtain by all legal and constitutional means the enforcement of the "Act for the Just Representation of the People"' (i.e. the Charter). There could be nothing to say against that. They invited Parliament to meet them in a 'Conference'. But the Petition was not ready; it was not presented to the House till June and not debated till July 12.¹ Meanwhile the starving constituents of these delegates, who had to find

¹ Fifty-six votes were then given for the motion to appoint a Committee to consider the Petition, two hundred and twenty-five against it.

a pound a week for each of them, were beginning to clamour for some return for their money. Desertions had set in long before the Petition was presented: in April the five Birmingham men seceded; in May the remainder of the delegates adjourned the meeting to Birmingham; and then there was a general adjournment for a long six weeks. By this time the warlike party had gained the upper hand, and there was wild talk of a run on banks, of refusal to pay tax or rent. Arms were being collected and pike-heads hammered. On July 4 a torch-light meeting in the Birmingham Bull-Ring, partly of genuine Chartists, but with a fringe of hooligans, was charged and broken up by a body of London policemen. These had been imported to keep order, for as yet there were no County police. Several leaders were arrested and were afterwards brought to trial for sedition. In mid-July the Convention, sadly dwindled to twenty-six persons, voted for a General Strike to begin on August 12, and there was another bad riot that night.¹ A week later the Convention repented, and decided, in true French-Revolutionary style, to refer the strike question to its constituents. Then the whole project fizzled out; 'the Trade Unions would not risk their funds, the leaders would not risk Botany Bay.'² There was no General Strike.

The Government had played its cards with some skill. Sir Charles Napier, whose sympathies were known to be

¹ A crowd in Kensington Gardens on Aug. 12 was mistaken for a Chartist meeting; 'whereas the good folks had come to see Mr. Hampton descend from [?]with] a parachute.' (Broughton, v. 223.)

² The utter materialism of the Trade-Unions is well illustrated by Ebenezer Elliott in *Bully Idle's Prayer*: it was written in 1848, not, as we might think, in 1920:—

Lord send us months of Sundays,
 A Saint's day every day,
 Shirts gratis, ditto breeches,
 No work and double pay;
 Tell Short and Long they're both Short now,
 To Fast and Slow one mede allow,
 Let Louis Blanc take Ashley's cow,
 And Richmond give him hay.

popular, if not Radical, was chosen to command the troops, some 6,000 in all, which were gradually drafted to the Northern Midlands. He fixed his head-quarters at Nottingham, with outposts at Manchester, Newcastle, Leeds, and Hull; he made a great show of his eighteen guns. Special constables were also sworn-in in large numbers. All the summer sporadic arrests of dangerous agitators were made, and the result was that O'Connor, who had recently been spouting blood and thunder, swung rapidly round and declared himself against 'physical force'. Lovett's brave and skilful defence, on his trial, was the only thing in the business of which any Chartist could be proud. The Convention dissolved itself at the end of August, after a series of sordid squabbles over its funds and its members' wages. Only in South Wales was there any outbreak, and the South Welsh miners were then geographically isolated from other storm-centres. John Frost, a respectable tradesman and J.P. of Newport, Monmouthshire, had, with some aid from Harney and Vincent, been preaching the Charter to the miners, and in November 1839 some 3,000¹ of these men, very poorly armed, marched upon Newport on a dark night in heavy rain. We know little of Frost's preparations, but the district was badly chosen, if the material was not, for the beginning of an armed rising. There happened to be a few soldiers in Newport, and these, at the order of the mayor, fired upon the insurgents with some precision, killing fourteen and wounding fifty. A large number were arrested and brought to trial in 1840: Frost and other two were condemned to death for high treason, respited, transported for life, pardoned and brought back in 1854; many others suffered imprisonment.

From that time, though the 'Charter' was still a watchword, the movement went downhill. It had many later ramifications; there was, for instance, a 'Christian Chartist' Society, with regular churches and schools, and this perhaps faded into the Christian Socialist movement, which was helped by Maurice and Kingsley in 1849-51. There was

¹ Mr. Hovell's figure is probably too low.

a parallel, if hostile, movement, got up by Lovett, with lecture halls, schools, and tracts, of a 'secularist' character; Holyoake tells us much about this. All probably did some good: all furthered the 'political education' of the people, when once the physical-force idea had been abandoned. There were some later attempts at Conventions, delegations, and petitions, made by the original leaders. In May 1842 a second Monster Petition claimed to have three million signatures,¹ and found forty-nine supporters in the Commons. This was followed by a serious strike in Lancashire, with riots and damage to mills; bodies of Chartists paraded the towns and called out all the hands, Cooper being one of the leaders. Disraeli, with picturesque exaggeration, describes the march of 'Bishop' Hatton at the head of his 'Hell-cats' into the mining [? manufacturing] districts, as the 'most striking' popular movement since the Pilgrimage of Grace . . . as they advanced their numbers continually increased, for they arrested all labour in their progress . . . the decree went forth that all labour was to cease till the Charter became the law of the land'.²

It was in 1840 that the genial, lovable Thomas Cooper, afterwards the friend of Maurice, and the adorer of the Duke of Wellington, became a Chartist at Leicester, after one of the most variegated careers of self-education on record: as shoemaker, schoolmaster, journalist, poet, novelist, Methodist preacher, atheist lecturer, and finally Baptist, he tells us, in his book, published (1872) in his old age, that he had learned two things: first that the aims of the Chartists were all right, their methods all wrong;³ and secondly that a demagogue is ever the instrument rather than the leader of the mob. More vividly than any one else Cooper describes the hopeless lack of union in the party, the bitter recrimination of the leaders against each other. He himself clung

¹ That of 1839 claimed 1,200,000 signatures.

² *Sybil*, vi. 6.

³ This was told to Cooper by Wordsworth, whom he visited at Rydal in 1846; it was then that he heard the great poet 'praise Mr. Tennyson very highly'.

to O'Connor as late as 1845. Two years before, O'Connor, who was not, I think, financially dishonest, had started a 'land-scheme', in which shares could be bought by all who would subscribe threepence a week. He hoped to call people 'back to the land'. Six estates were purchased and divided into four-acre plots, to be worked on co-operative principles; and any one now walking the high road between Oxford and Gloucester may see the melancholy remains of 'Charterville' on a dreary eastern spur of the Cotswolds. The idea was good; but English town-labourers did not want, and unfortunately do not want now, to be called back to the land, nor would they know what to do if they got there. Moreover the whole thing was a complete financial failure. Another interesting outcome of Chartism was the foundation in 1844 of the 'Society of the Democratic Friends of All Nations'.¹ This had its attraction for the foreign refugees who swarmed in London, and the French Revolution of February 1848 was not uninfluenced by Chartist propaganda.

That Revolution in fact speedily echoed back to England, and Chartism lifted its head for a last fling. In March there were riots in Glasgow and riots in London. A new National Convention was called at the beginning of April, the leading agitator, besides O'Connor, being one Reynolds, afterwards the founder of a weekly newspaper. They would proclaim a Republic, with a Directory of five persons. A third Monster Petition was prepared and a Monster Meeting was to be held on Kennington Common on April 10th; a march to Westminster was arranged. The Government acted swiftly and successfully. Special constables were sworn-in,

¹ Mazzini, the most single-minded, but not the most practical, of the Italian Revolutionists, was one of its chief founders. He had spent most of his life as an exile in London. Though he cannot be acquitted of readiness to plot political crimes of violence, he was essentially religious. Grant-Duff (*Diary*, p. 134) records a walk taken with him in his old age (1864): 'He spoke much of the religious future of the world . . . the next great religion would be the religion of progress, but what that might mean I did not gather.' In 1864 Karl Marx founded in London the first *Internationale*, a purely Communistic body of very dangerous persons.

Mr. Gladstone and the future Emperor of the French being among them. The aged Duke of Wellington drew up troops in convenient and concealed places, showing only a few bayonets at central points. Some fifteen or twenty thousand persons, mostly spectators drawn by curiosity, met at the appointed hour and place,

And out we came in Freedom's name
Last April was the tenth.

When O'Connor drove up in a hack-cab, he was quietly interviewed by Mr. Mayne, the Chief Constable of London. Thereupon he harangued the meeting and advised it to disperse; he then drove to the Home Office and interviewed Sir George Grey (Home Secretary), told him that he had had his toes trodden on till he was lame, and his pocket picked, and would have no more to do with it.¹ The sequel is perhaps best given in one of Leech's immortal cartoons:—'Is it the intention', asks the mob-orator, 'of your proud masters at all hazards to prevent our demonstration?' 'Yes, Sir,' says the magistrate courteously. 'Then know, O Myrmidon of the brutal Whigs, that I shall go home to my tea and advise my comrades to do the same'.² The Monster Petition, which Gammage asserts to have weighed nearly six hundred-weight, was carried on three 'growlers' to the House of Commons. The 'six million signatures', which it was supposed to bear, were found by the thirteen clerks who counted them to be less than two million, and many of them were obviously forged by the same hand, others were impudent mockeries. There were a few arrests, one or two transportations. Ernest Jones, one of O'Connor's latest recruits, got two years' imprisonment. O'Connor died insane in 1855. The revival of trade from 1843 onwards had done more to kill Chartism than all the forces of all the Governments.

¹ Greville, vi. 166.

² *Punch*, vol. xiv, p. 260 (June 1848). This referred to an incident which happened in June, and the hero was a London Chartist called Macdougall (Greville, vi. 193); for there were a few belated up-spurts of Chartism in the summer.

This account of Chartism has carried us far beyond 1841, yet, before we part wholly from the Whigs in that year, we must mention one or two of their measures which bore fruit in the future, notably Public Education and the Penny Post.¹ In 1833 a small Treasury grant of £20,000 a year had been allotted in aid of schools under the control of the Established Church. Brougham had been hammering at the question ever since 1816, and in 1829 had actually introduced a Bill to levy a local rate to pay for schools. The lack of schools in large new towns was notorious; their population was growing up not only heathen but wholly illiterate. In 1839, at the direct instance of the Queen, Russell increased the grant to £30,000 a year and established a Committee of the Privy Council, to appoint inspectors and to allocate the grant independently of the Church. The Bishops were up in arms and tried to wreck the measure, which became law in spite of them. The Dissenters, for their part, afterwards fought just as stoutly against all educational proposals framed to give Church schools even a reasonable equality with secular ones. We shall have more to say on this in later pages, for the problem is with us still.

In the same year, 1839, the scheme of Rowland Hill for a penny letter-post in the United Kingdom was got through, and it became law in January 1840. Few greater boons have been given to the nation. The privilege, which had been enjoyed² at least since 1660 by members of both Houses of Parliament, of sending letters post-free, was now abolished. The revenue from the Post Office had been stationary since 1816, and in fact this 'mercantile project',

¹ Note also the creation of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, to hear appeals from Ecclesiastical, Admiralty, and Colonial Courts; this was wholly Brougham's work, and became law in 1834. The creation of County Courts, for the recovery of small debts and small damages, was really a Whig measure, introduced by Brougham in 1833; for, though Lyndhurst threw it out at that date, he carried it himself at the end of his third Chancellorship, 1846.

² It seems to have originated in the duty, supposed to be incumbent on members of the Lower House, to send news to their constituents.

as Adam Smith called it, barely paid its way. The rates of postage were most various; it was never prepaid and the postmen had to collect it on delivery of letters. So it cost, on the average, two minutes to deliver each letter. Concerning the numbers of letters annually posted, before and after the reform, Porter's *Progress of the Nation* gives 99 millions in 1839, 265 millions in 1843, 2,517 millions in 1910. Halfpenny postcards and halfpenny postage for a certain weight of 'printed matter' were introduced in 1870; and other activities, Post-office savings-banks, electric telegraphy, wireless telegraphy, public telephones, have gradually been thrown on the shoulders of the department. The Government profits from the whole of these have never seriously increased; telegraphy and telephony were being worked at a loss before 1914. The Bill of 1839 did not pass without a good deal of opposition. That sound old Tory, Mr. Raikes, notes in his *Journal*¹ that it 'will increase the numbers of idle scribblers, and be of little benefit to the lower classes who seldom have occasion to write'; while readers of *Coningsby* will remember how Mr. Rigby (whose portrait was so unjustly drawn from Croker) 'was concocting a very slashing article to prove that the penny postage must be the destruction of the aristocracy'.²

'Did I ask', said Mr. Grimes, in the *Water-Babies*, 'to have lighted straw put under me to make me go up?' [i. e. up Chimney No. 345.] 'No,' said Mrs. Bedonebyasyoudid, 'no more did Tom when you behaved to him in the very same way.' One of the best Whig Acts was that of 1840—a Government measure, but wholly due to Ashley's persistence—which prohibited the use of 'climbing-boy' chimney-sweeps. The matter had been before Parliament ever since 1788, when an Act prohibited the employment of boys under 8 (!). An Act of 1834 was actually needed to prohibit the sending of a boy up a chimney-on-fire to put it out. Children were often stolen for the purpose—see

¹ iii. 355.

² *Coningsby*, viii. 6.

Blake's poems, 'A little black thing among the snow', and the better known one,

When my mother died I was very young,
And my father sold me when yet my tongue
Could scarcely cry 'Weep, 'weep, 'weep, 'weep,'
So your chimneys I sweep and in soot I sleep.

If Ashley had done only this his name would be immortal; but it was only one of a dozen beneficent things that he did.

Less noted by historians are such measures as the steady mitigation, by a series of Acts, 1832-41, of the Criminal Code; here Russell was merely carrying on Peel's work of the days before the Reform Bill; since 1838 no one has been hanged except for piracy, murder, or attempted murder.¹ Nor in legislating for Man was the Friend of Man forgotten; to my younger readers a 'dog-cart' means a horse-drawn vehicle in which they and their dogs are conveyed to and from the scene of a day's shooting; to their grandfathers it was, as it still is in Belgium, a small dog-drawn barrow, and it is liable to cruel abuse because a dog's feet are not naturally adapted for traction: such 'dog-carts' were prohibited by an Act of 1839.

¹ An Act of 1861 abolished the death-penalty for attempted murder, robbery with violence, arson, and sodomy. At the end of our period only treason, murder, piracy, and setting fire to dock-yards, were punishable with death. Sir James Stephen in his *History of the Criminal Law* (i. 478 sqq.) has a few biting sentences on the leniency of the modern law towards violent and fraudulent criminals: 'if Society could make up its mind to the destruction of really bad offenders, they might in a very few years be made as rare as wolves.' Since Penal Servitude was substituted for Transportation in 1853, the number of *heavy* sentences has steadily decreased; on the other hand, the great increase of local legislation has added a great many non-indictable offences (often involving no moral guilt), for which fines are imposed, and great numbers of persons are still imprisoned for short terms because they cannot pay some tuppenny fine. Reformatories for juvenile offenders were introduced in 1842.

CHAPTER IV

SIR ROBERT PEEL AND THE QUESTION OF FREE IMPORTS

WHEN Melbourne resigned in 1841 he left the finances of the Kingdom in a perilous state. Our widely-spread network of indirect taxes could no longer provide an adequate revenue, and the push which tumbled the Government over was given by Russell's motion to consider the duties on foreign corn and sugar. The Whigs seemed to be the proper party to tackle this big question, and Russell was believed to be a legislator who would not shrink from comprehensive schemes. People had yet to realize his habit of chalking up a terrifying notice and then running away. Melbourne himself was entirely averse from touching the Corn Laws, partly from his inveterate habit of leaving contentious questions alone, but also from his foresight of the danger of depending on food from beyond seas.

Adam Smith had laid it down as an axiom that 'to prohibit the import of foreign corn and cattle was to enact that population should never increase beyond what the rude produce of our soil could maintain'.¹ Perhaps, indeed, such a limit of population would tend to make a nation happy. If we could imagine an England blessed with the humane temper, and with most (not all) of the discoveries of the nineteenth century, yet with the limited population of the eighteenth, its material condition would be enviable. But nations do not live by bread alone, nor by cheap bread alone, and a Britain of eleven millions could never have subdued and replenished the earth as our Britain has done. Meanwhile in 1841 the population was far in excess of what the 'rude produce of the soil' could maintain, and was increasing by about 1,000 souls (and bodies) every day.

¹ *Wealth of Nations*, iv. ii.

The long depression of trade and the low rate of wages had led to a loud cry, skilfully raised and controlled by sincere and able men, in favour of absolutely free import of corn, if not of everything else. These men were independent of, and generally hostile to, the contemporary democratic movement traced above: 'it was a middle-class cry, a middle-class agitation.' At least so said its enemies on both flanks, the Tory landlords in Parliament, and the Chartist orators in the streets. But this was not altogether true: the real triumph of the Anti-Corn-Law League was the provision of cheap bread for the poor, and Peel in 1846 saw this even more clearly than the League leaders themselves. It was, moreover, their only triumph, and their only excuse. Was it, or was it not, an adequate excuse?

Besides the cheap bread, the enemies of the Corn-Laws had another avowed object, the maintenance of a wide foreign market for our manufactures. 'Will foreign countries', they asked, 'continue to buy our cotton, woollen, and iron goods if we continue to refuse their corn?' This argument led to much honest denunciation of the movement as being one designed simply to benefit the 'Manchester men'. And we must never forget that you cannot call our present one-sided system by the name of 'Free-trade'. Trade is 'free' where John says to Jonathan 'I will buy the corn you want to sell without charging any duty on it at Liverpool, if you will buy the cloth I want to sell without charging any duty on it at New York'. We have not got, and never have had, that: we were in such a hurry to buy the corn that we couldn't wait till Jonathan dropped his duty on the cloth. But it was in honest belief that Jonathan *must* see his advantage in doing this, that the 'free-traders', from 1843 to 1860, set to work to sweep away all duties on imports except on a few 'articles of luxury' (such as wine and tobacco); and on these the duty was only retained as a convenient source of a large revenue. Unluckily neither Jonathan, nor any other country, least of all our own Colonies, have hitherto been able to perceive their own advantage.

The leading apostle of free imports has been supremely fortunate in his biographer; Lord Morley's *Life of Richard Cobden* is an English Classic. Cobden was born of a yeoman family in West Sussex in 1814; the scent of the sweet downland just saved him from being a bad prig, and happily that scent was never far from his sensitive nostrils. No more sincere man ever lived, but, like many others on the verge of prigdom, he was a trifle narrow, a trifle shallow; though the stream of his ideas was crystal-clear, its drift was towards abstract sense and simple logic: the complexities of life, human and national, were hidden from him. He was a perfect master of colloquial oratory and could handle figures and statistics in such fashion as to make them not only intelligible but amusing. Yet he damaged his own cause by unfairness to opponents; he would denounce landlords, *nominatim et in specie*, the Army, the Navy, the aristocracy, and whatever Government was in power, with the humorous gusto with which Mr. Lloyd George was once wont to attack dukes.¹ No doubt he cared more to influence opinion outside Parliament than inside.

An Anti-Corn-Law Association was already in being, and Charles Villiers ('the father of Free-trade') was making annual motions for the repeal of those laws, and was getting many votes to support him, when, in the autumn of '38, stimulated by an exceptionally high price for wheat, the League was founded at Manchester. Soon it possessed a newspaper of its own, and a scheme of lectures had been organized. Before Peel was well in the saddle Cobden had been joined by the Quaker mill-owner John Bright, as single-minded and honest as himself, but of greater depth,

¹ 'Mr. Cobden rated the Protectionist party in that clear and saucy style which he knows so well how to manage' (Disraeli, *Bentinck*, 141). It is remarkable that Lord Morley never mentions Cobden's worst exhibition of bad taste, his denunciation at Manchester, in Jan. 1848, of the Duke of Wellington, in consequence of the Duke's openly expressed anxiety on the state of our defences (Dasent's *Life of John Delane*, i. 70); indeed, the biographer passes almost entirely over this ugly feature in his hero's character.

foresight, and power, if also of greater bitterness. Bright brought a religious force to bear on the question. The outgoing Whigs had thrown on the table the suggestion of a low duty of 8s. per quarter on all foreign corn, and to this it might be supposed that moderates of both parties would have rallied. But the Conservatives owed their large majority at the Election of '41 largely to the cry that the Corn-Laws were in danger, and Peel's Cabinet ¹ was hailed by their supporters as a heaven-sent bulwark of those laws. Such success, then, as Peel had in converting some of his party, and a majority of his Cabinet, to a complete *volte-face* in 1846, must be partly ascribed to the wonderful financial skill with which he, in his first three years, substituted for an alarming deficit a large annual surplus, partly to his own adroit parliamentary tactics, but most of all to 'the nature of things in themselves'. At the end, the stars in their courses proved themselves Cobden's best allies.

So wholly does the question of free imports dominate the years of Peel's Ministry, and, in fact, the whole period until the Crimean War (for the strife of opinions did not cease with the repeal of the Corn-Laws), that we are apt to forget that the same period, 1841-53, was marked by many other important incidents. Such were the Bank Charter Act, 1844: the reduction of the interest on the National Debt from 3½ to 3 per cent.: the reimposition of an income-tax: the vast extension of railroads: a series of sharp religious struggles in all three kingdoms: the recrudescence and final extinction of Chartism: and, best of all, the establishment of a real control over the labour of women and children in mines as well as in factories. It was a fortunate period for such changes to be tried: many of their promoters lived to see them bear beneficent fruit; many of their opponents lived to read recantations. For the share that Peel's Government

¹ Lyndhurst, Chancellor: Goulburn, Exchequer: Graham, Home Office: Aberdeen, Foreign Office: Stanley, Colonies: Wellington, in the Cabinet without office: Gladstone, Vice-President of Board of Trade till 1843, when he entered the Cabinet as President of the same (resigned 1845).

bore in these changes Lord Morley's praise is not too high:—¹ 'it laid the groundwork of our solid commercial policy, it established our railway system, it settled the currency, and, by no means least, it gave us a good national character in Europe as lovers of moderation, equity, and peace.'

Mr. Cobden was elected for Stockport in 1841. Four years before, to the first of Victoria's Parliaments, Benjamin Disraeli had been elected for Maidstone.² Gladstone still sat for Newark, and has been credited (by admirers) with a large share in the task of 'opening Peel's eyes'.³ In the main, the struggle over free imports was to resolve itself into a 'duel of three', Peel, Cobden, Disraeli; Gladstone no doubt hung on, and picked up, from Peel and experience, much of his subsequent knowledge of commerce and finance. He was still strongly prejudiced against Cobden, from whom, however, he was unconsciously learning the arts of the demagogue; and it was in these years that he also conceived his deep personal aversion for Disraeli.

In the session of 1842 Peel just touched the fringe of the great question, and proposed a new sliding scale for the corn duties; even this cost him one duke (Buckingham, no great loss). He then took up the extremely unfavourable *Report* on the whole system of our tariffs, presented by a Committee which had been appointed by the Whigs. Lord Morley calls this report the 'Charter of Free-trade'. Acting on its recommendation, Peel began a wholesale reduction, or

¹ *Life of Gladstone*, i. 245.

² 'The Chancellor [Lyndhurst] called on me yesterday (Dec. 5, 1834) about getting young Disraeli into Parliament (through the means of George Bentinck) for Lynn. I had told him that George wanted a good man . . . and he suggested the above-named gentleman. His political principles, however, must be in abeyance, for he said that Durham was offering him a seat . . . he must be a mighty impartial personage. I don't think such a man would do, though just such as Lyndhurst would be connected with.' (Greville, iii. 170.)

³ 'Mr. Gladstone expounded the principles of free-trade, though, it was true, he gave the adroitest reasons for not applying them.' (Morley, *Cobden*, 284.) 'His arguments were in favour of free-trade, his parentheses in favour of protection.' (Morley, *Gladstone*, i. 264.)

abolition, of vexatious import-dues, which brought in little or nothing to the Exchequer; and he bolstered up his budget against any possible loss by the introduction (he avowed it to be only a temporary measure) of a tax of 7*d.* for every £1 of income on all incomes above £150 a year. Disraeli, though already sore that Peel had refused his direct (and very bumptious) request for office in 1841, congratulated his leader on this first budget, continued to applaud him for quite two years, and talked about 'following in the footsteps of Pitt'.

This extraordinary man was of the same age as Cobden, and five years older than Gladstone. He was the son of a refined gentleman and scholar, who had abandoned his Jewish faith without adopting any other. Benjamin was baptized in his ninth year, and always professed an attachment to the Church of England. He had no proper schooling, and, though he had read a good deal of Latin and Greek in his boyhood, he was never a scholar, and never wrote a scholar's English. To the last he remained an Oriental, with all the brooding imagination of the East—'always standing upon Asia and gazing upon Europe'¹—in his powerful brain. To that brain-power, as to his imagination, there were few limits: he was indeed 'un esprit à qui Dieu n'a pas donné de bornes'.² His early bad taste, his atrocious 'dressiness', his pose as a dandy, his gambling on the Stock Exchange (this left him saddled with debts, which he continually increased in the most reckless fashion till they almost throttled him), his plunges into political journalism and political novel-writing, his discreditable courtship of public men of both parties, his lack of scruple in statement and in innuendo, his lack of measure in denunciation—all these could not wholly counterbalance his three great qualities, soaring ambition for lofty ends, boundless self-confidence, and dauntless courage. It is a mistake, says the able editor of his *Life*, to think of Disraeli merely as a great

¹ *Beaconsfield*, i. 244.

² I believe this was said of Richelieu, but I am unable to verify my quotation.

Conservative statesman: to the end he remained above party, and 'a political free-thinker'.¹ Such a man was also above political loves and hatreds; in private life, too, he was capable of warm affections, incapable of personal hatreds. He hated certain ideas, among them the 'utilitarian' idea, the Bentham-Mill philosophy. He believed, and perhaps really tried to translate his belief into fact, that nations could be governed only by sympathy. Whether he felt the sympathy is another matter: the answer to that, and to many another question, remained locked in that inscrutable breast.

No man who has played a great part on our political stage ever had so much to live down, and for a very long time, perhaps always, Disraeli deserved all he got. The Gods are just, and of our youthful indiscretions they seldom fail to make us whips to scourge us. And it is a piece of consummate tragedy—so deep and so lasting was the distrust inspired by the indiscretions of this great man, indiscretions, indeed, prolonged far beyond the period of his youth—that, when power at last came to him, it came too late; he was worn out before it came.

Peel was, no doubt, a bad judge of men, and he was too shy and too much lacking in prescience, to court such a man as Disraeli. With his own feet firmly planted on the hard, if narrow, bed-rock of English common sense, he probably thought of him as some venomous gad-fly whose stings he might safely neglect; though, from 1844, being also a sensitive man, he began to suffer badly from those stings. In that year the said gad-fly threw off his allegiance, and though, for many years to come, he could not win the confidence of the House or of the Country, yet he could always be sure of a patient, often of an eager, audience. For his insight was so keen that he could always choose the best line of attack; and, whether he were dressing down poor Aberdeen for subservience to Russia, supporting Ashley's crusade against the factories, denouncing the New Poor Law, ridiculing the doctrine that free imports meant Free-trade, or dissecting

¹ *Beaconsfield*, i. 228.

the Irish policy of the Government, his words cut like razors.

In these years *Coningsby* (1844) and *Sybil* (1845) were published; and, one by one, were coming over to their author a few young sprigs of nobility whose hearts and sympathies were stronger than their heads; so was formed the 'Young England' party of these famous novels, a party which had more reverence for the past than understanding of it.¹

The stings implanted in Peel's bosom availed little to check the steady march of his financial reforms; his four successive budgets, 1842-5, struck more and more blows at the tariff, and each was cheered to the echo by the 'Manchester Men'. Peel had found twelve hundred articles taxed on importation; he struck off three-fourths of them. The country gentlemen whom he led were alarmed? Yes, but they could not close their eyes to the fact that the prosperity, and even the revenue, of the country were leaping forward. All prices fell except that of corn, and even this was so low that early in '45 it seemed to be taking the wind out of Cobden's sails. Indeed, it was not the cost of bread, even after the bad harvest of that year, that gave Cobden victory; the existing Corn-Law hardly affected prices at all. It was the recollection of worse times, and of long-abandoned Corn-Laws, that kept the agitation alive. Peel appropriated most of his surpluses to the direct reduction of the capital of the National Debt: in his best year (1845) he paid off four millions.² By the Act of 1844 the Bank of England was

¹ When Egremont is musing amid the ruins of the Abbey (*Sybil*, ii. 4) and asks himself, 'Were there any rickburners in the times of the Lord-Abbots? and, if not, why not? And why should the stacks of the Earl of Marney be destroyed and those of the Abbot of Marney spared?' one is tempted to ask whether the author had ever heard of the Peasant Insurrection of 1381.

² The interest then annually due was 28½ millions, the total revenue was 53 millions. The third edition (the last revised by the author) of Porter's *Progress* was published in 1851, just after the triumph of 'free imports'; and it is amusing to read Mr. Porter's smug criticism of the 'bad finance and extravagance of the Ministers

divided into two departments, one an ordinary credit-bank, the other to issue a note-currency, for convenience of commerce, exchangeable for gold at its counter; the value of the notes in circulation was never to exceed by more than fourteen millions the amount of gold kept in its cellars. The effect of the Act on financial crises has often been debated, and on three subsequent occasions of panic (1847, 1857, 1866) either it has been suspended, or the promise to suspend it has been made by the Government, and each such suspension or promise has at once relieved the panic. The Act has certainly prevented the depreciation of bank-notes below their face-value, and this has been a great blessing. Also it has led to the gradual extinction of small private banks, and to the concentration of business in large joint-stock banks, a change which, as much as anything else, has mitigated panics.

When Disraeli attacked Peel's Irish policy he put his finger on his weak place. O'Connell, fairly quiet till about 1839-40, had then started his 'Repeal' agitation and 'Repeal-rent', though of a hundred and five Irish members not twenty followed him in this demand.¹ He had lost his seat for Dublin, and in Peel's first Parliament he sat for Cork. The initial success of 'home-rule' in Canada put a puff of wind into the sails of 'Repeal'. A new party, however, was growing up, calling itself 'Young Ireland', started by Gavan Duffy, soon led by wilder spirits. For a time it was disposed to follow O'Connell's lead, or at least to use his popularity. But the foundation in 1843 of *The Nation*, which Morris calls the 'first successful disloyal newspaper', was a step in a new direction. To Mitchel and Meagher, Repeal was to be merely of the Napoleonic war', which 'dissipated the resources of the Kingdom'; he forgot that, if there had been no such expenditure, there would have been no resources to dissipate, and no kingdom to be injured.

¹ Right down to Isaac Butt's death in 1879, says Morris (*Ireland, 1798-1898*, 109), there were some intelligent and independent Irish Catholics returned to Parliament, and also some liberal Protestants; but always a dwindling minority. 'O'Connell's tail' were the true predecessors of Parnell's thoroughly disloyal following.

the prelude to Independence. O'Connell was horrified at such ideas, yet he promised that '43 should be the 'Repeal Year', and he organized a series of monster meetings in the open air. Mass was said at them, and a religious aspect was given to the movement. Peel rightly took alarm, and began drafting fresh troops into Ireland. He passed an Act prohibiting the carrying of arms, which seems reasonable enough now, but then produced a great outcry. In the autumn of '43 a great monster meeting was to be held at Clontarf, and the Government prohibited it the day before it was due. To the great wrath of 'Young Ireland' O'Connell obeyed the prohibition, and was himself obeyed by the peasants. Yet he was brought to trial for sedition, and to a trial which was conspicuously unfair (for the Court and the jury were wholly Protestant), and was felt in England to be unfair. He was found guilty, but sentence was deferred till May 1844, when he was fined and condemned to a year's prison. He appealed to the House of Lords, his appeal was upheld,¹ and he was liberated in September. He had behaved exceedingly well during the crisis. He was nearly seventy, and perhaps he foresaw something of the future, repented somewhat of his past. He spent much of his leisure in attending Anti-Corn-Law meetings, but would never have anything to say to the Chartists.

Peel, while repressing disorder and treason, was most anxious to conciliate Ireland by social and religious benefits.

¹ It was on this occasion that all the lay (i.e. non-legal) peers walked out of the House; in theory every peer has an equal right to vote on appeals as on all other questions. Legally the Appeal ought to have failed, for all the Judges, when consulted by the House of Lords, were against the Appellant on nine out of eleven counts. The five law-lords were three to two in the Appellant's favour. It is greatly to the credit of the House that its lay members abstained from voting, for most of them felt very bitter against O'Connell. Greville (v. 218) says 'this unhappy trial has been one continual course of blunders and mismanagement from first to last . . . the Government has missed the great opportunity of giving a convincing proof to the Irish that they wish O'Connell to have a fair trial'. But the action of the Lords redeemed this terrible mistake. (Cf. *ibid.* 254-6.)

In 1844 he appointed Lord Devon's Commission to inquire into the whole condition of the country. These Commissioners, nearly all great landowners, went to the root of the evil, and recommended that the system of 'dual ownership' should be recognized, and that the tenant who made any improvements on his property should be fully compensated for the cost of these, if he were evicted. Stanley introduced a Bill to give effect to a portion, but only a portion, of these recommendations. Even this Bill was rejected by the Lords; and the next legislative effort which affected Irish land was Lord Clarendon's 'Encumbered Estates Act' of 1849, for facilitating the sale of the property of ruined landlords. This merely attempted the impossible task of bringing land-tenure in Ireland into line with the ordinary English system. Unfortunately the purchasers of such 'encumbered estates' were for the most part speculators, newly-enriched tradesmen and the like, who ignored the old dual ownership, evicted tenants recklessly, and raised rents where they did not evict. Meanwhile, Peel also trebled the grant, originally made by the old Irish Parliament, to the seminary of Maynooth, for the education of Catholic priests. Here for once he was in line with O'Connell, though by 1845 O'Connell could help him but little; and Maynooth lost him the most energetic member of his Cabinet.¹ Next came the establishment of three Colleges at Belfast, Cork, and Galway, for purely secular education; Peel called them 'The Queen's', Sir Robert Inglis nicknamed them 'The Godless', Colleges, O'Connell jumped at the nickname, and denounced them. Rome, which had been inclined to pat Peel on the back in '44-5, ended by denouncing them too. As Lecky says, 'the priests cared more for influence than for education', either their own or that of their flocks. The bulk of the Irish

¹ Mr. Gladstone resigned in 1845 rather than support a Government which endowed any religious body outside the Church of England. So tortuous was his explanation of his resignation that 'no one in the House understood what he was talking about'. (Morley, *Gladstone*, i. 278, 279.) Even of this explanation he made nonsense by voting for the grant to Maynooth.

peasants and priests retained a sentimental attachment to O'Connell, even while the lead of their cause was being snatched from him by the Meaghers and Mitchels, who were heading straight for confiscation of land, open rebellion, and foreign aid. And the Famine came and went, and O'Connell died at Genoa in 1847.

In all his measures Peel was far more fortunate than the Whigs had been, for he had to encounter none of the opposition which had always beset them 'in another place'. Disraeli¹ protested that Wellington had 'drilled the House of Lords into a guard-room',² and it was true; the change in the votes, if not in the spirit, of that venerable assembly was amazing, and it really seems to have been due more to the Duke's determination to support anything which was called a Conservative Government, than to the pliability of Lord Chancellor Lyndhurst. In the Commons, however, Russell, as Whig Leader, never displayed for Peel's measures the consideration Peel had shown towards his; nay, he showed himself a mere captious party-man, sincere only when his blind fanaticism led him to yelp against the grant to Maynooth.

Even when Peel was wrong the Lords supported him blindly. It is pardonable for us to wonder whether the great Minister, if he had been granted another five or ten years of life and power, would have surrendered to Ashley, as he surrendered to O'Connell in '29 and to Cobden in '46. He was too wise not to see that the whole future of the nation was being mortgaged by the continued employment of women and children in unhealthy occupations, in the most demoralizing conditions, and for extravagantly long hours. Yet, on the main principle, he stoutly resisted Ashley, and in this resistance he had the steady support of his Home Secretary, Graham. Neither of them, however, was able wholly to refuse restrictive legislation for the factories, and still less when Ashley's Committee on Mines presented its

¹ *Beaconsfield*, ii. 327.

² The Duke held no office in this great Ministry of Peel's; the Queen had reproached him for this, but he told her that he could be more useful to her without an office than with one. (Greville, v. 39.)

report. Most of the evils here were the fault of the colliers themselves; though their own wages were relatively high, they did not scruple to allow their infants of six years to spend twelve or thirteen hours a day, in wet, grime, and darkness, in the pits, nor their wives and daughters to be harnessed, half naked, to trucks, which they often had to drag on hands and knees, for even longer hours. The Act of 1842 prohibited the labour of boys under ten, and all female labour whatsoever, in the Mines. But for a ten-hour day in Factories Ashley and Fielden laboured in vain till Peel had fallen, and only in 1847 was that limit placed on all labour except adult male labour.¹

Ashley's opponents betrayed much ignorance of common physiological facts. Ashley was not a very logical man, nor always a very temperate advocate; but one would have supposed that a mind like Peel's would have realized that the hands and brains of women and children must needs be exhausted after ten hours of monotonous, and often very hard, work, and that in the last two hours of each day they could earn little profit for their employers. But no, said the employers, said Peel and Graham, said even Bright, and sometimes (not always) Cobden,² it is just these last two

¹ One or two other concessions were at least wrung from Peel in 1844: an Act limited to six-and-a-half hours the working time of factory children under thirteen years, and also put an end to the apprenticing of pauper children under ten, and started Workhouse Schools for them. After 1847 only coping-stones needed to be put on—e.g. the Act of 1874, forbidding child labour under 14 (it ought now to be raised to 16), and that of 1891, forbidding the employment of women within four weeks after child-birth. 'No legislation', says Lecky (*Dem. and Lib.*, ii. 335), 'of the nineteenth century has been more successful than the Factory Legislation.' In 1860 old Roebuck and Graham both said in the House how much they repented of their former opposition to Ashley; in 1864 Gladstone followed suit. Would not Peel, who towered so far above these men, morally and intellectually, have anticipated them in confessing his mistake?

² Cobden was against child-labour, but against all other restrictions. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the Manchester Men thought more of their profits than of the hard conditions under which they were earned.

hours that bring us our (very slender) profit. One very steady supporter among the Whigs Ashley always had, his step-father-in-law Palmerston;¹ Disraeli also he always had, and we have no right to say that Disraeli's was an interested support. Disraeli's future rival he never had at all, but between Gladstone and Ashley lay the bitter *odium* of a High Churchman for a Low Churchman. Russell blew now hot, now cold; he disliked 'enthusiasm' as much as any eighteenth-century bishop. Peel, though Ashley thought him 'an iceberg with a slight thaw on it', was always personally friendly to the great crusader, and often tried to tempt him to take office; Ashley too readily suspected that such offers were made in order to muzzle him. His own isolation was made worse when he swung round to Peel on the repeal of the Corn-Laws in '46. He had been elected as a Protectionist, and most honourably resigned his seat (which few Peelites did) and was out of Parliament till the autumn of '47. One of his recent successes had been the organization of 'Ragged Schools'; he was not their original founder, but directly he took them up in 1843 he extended their operations over nearly all the slums in London.

We need not spend much time over the fall of the Corn-Laws: the agitation against them had increased throughout 1842-3-4, and its methods, though strictly constitutional, raised a great deal of bitterness, which found voice in *The Times*. Lord Morley says that a *hundred tons* of Anti-Corn-Law literature had been circulated before the end of 1843: in 1844 the League was spending £1,000 a week (no wonder the Chartists envied and hated it). When in 1845 the high tide of prosperity seemed to render the agitation unnecessary, Cobden could always reply, 'Yes, cheap food makes good trade'. In that year Peel, listening to Cobden's lucid arguments in the House, whispered to his neighbour, 'You must answer this, for I can't'. And it was in that

¹ Palmerston was also an ardent opponent of slavery and the slave-trade which the Arabs still carried on in Africa; hence to David Livingstone he is always 'the good Lord Palmerston'. (See Livingstone's *Last Journals*, passim).

autumn that Cobden wrote: 'three weeks of rain will rain away the Corn-Laws.' And then came rumours of the failure of the potato crop in Western Ireland. Cobden's rain also came, and English wheat shot up to 64s. Peel realized that Ireland might soon, as in 1822, have to be fed by English charity, and that for this purpose it would be necessary to 'open the ports', i.e. to suspend the duty on foreign corn. Could that duty be afterwards re-imposed? Peel honestly said to his private friends that he didn't think it could. But he never said so to his whole party; he never (and it had been the same story in 1829) took his party into his confidence. 'The frequent meetings of the Cabinet towards the end of 1845 excited a lively interest in the country.'¹ On such a state of opinion, John Russell's 'Edinburgh Letter' of November fell like a bomb, though no one seemed more surprised at its effects than John himself. The letter announced his complete conversion to the doctrines of the League. Obviously Peel had but one course open—to resign; and he resigned on December 5, advising the Queen to send for Russell. Obviously Russell had but one honest course open, to form a Free-trade Government, or at least a Government which would put to rest the question of the Corn-Laws. Yet the miserable man shirked the consequences of his own act. He undertook, in a half-hearted way, to sound his friends, and did sound them; but, when Lord Grey (what was Lord Grey to him or to the country in such a crisis? he was only the son of the old Reform-Bill orator, and, as Colonial Secretary, he proved himself as stupid as Glenelg himself) refused to serve if Palmerston were to have the Foreign Office, Lord John told the Queen 'he would rather not'.

Peel may have been an opportunist, and was called a turncoat (though I will never throw such a stone at him), but he had at least high moral courage. He resumed office and, though he lost Stanley, he said, 'I think I can form a Government which will just carry the repeal of the Corn-

¹ *Bentinck*, p. 2.

Laws', and he did.¹ It was, in fact, the interest of the Whigs to help Peel to carry the measure, then to turn him out and reap the fruits of his courage.² Yet in no meaner light were party politics ever displayed than in the sequel to Peel's conversion, and that is why Disraeli's *Life of Lord George Bentinck*, great literature as it is, leaves such a bad taste in the reader's mouth; it is well called 'a political biography'. The description therein given of the feelings of the House, when Peel unfolded his plan in February 1846, surpasses, as mere literature, even Macaulay's account of the division of 1831.

Peel's Bill laid down a sliding scale for three more years, and at the end of that time a merely nominal duty of 1s. per quarter.³ It was carried by large majorities in the Lower, and by substantial ones in the now utterly tamed Upper House. 'And I trust', wrote Cobden, 'we shall never hear the name of corn in the House of Commons again.' Lord Morley does not quote the happy parallel from Arthur Young.⁴ Peel's speech on the Bill gave all the credit and all the glory to Cobden, and he bravely took some of the obloquy on himself. But on the day on which that Bill passed the Lords (June 25) a Coercion Bill for

¹ Gladstone came back as Colonial Secretary to this Government, but, failing to be re-elected for Newark, he was the last person to hold office without a seat in Parliament (he remained out for 18 months). In the autumn of 1847 he was elected for Oxford University in spite of strong opposition. His opponent, Mr. Round, was reputed to be a 'fossil', but one of Round's supporters said, with some prescience, that 'he would sooner be represented by an old woman than by a young man'.

² Cobden, 359.

³ When this perfectly harmless duty was taken off by Gladstone, as a piece of theatrical clap-trap, in 1869, it was bringing in £900,000 a year.

⁴ Cobden, 382. Arthur Young (*Travels in France*, ed. Betham-Edwards, p. 351), writing in 1792 of the absurd solicitude of the French Revolutionary Assemblies about the grain-trade, says, 'Proclaim a free trade, and from that moment ordain that an ink-stand be crammed instantly into the throat of the first member that pronounces the word corn'.

Ireland, which the very combination of Whigs and Protectionists that now opposed it had declared to be absolutely necessary, was thrown out in the Commons by seventy-three votes, merely to spite Peel, and Peel had to resign. The Duke rightly said: 'it was a blackguard combination that upset him.'¹

For now a third Party had been added, a Protectionist Party. Or shall we say, with Disraeli, that it was the Peelite Party that was new, the Conservative Party that remained and rallied to Protection? It does not matter which we say, for that Peel's action had rent the Conservatives in twain there can be no doubt. The nominal leader of the Protectionists, Lord George Bentinck, who had been the 'Leviathan of the Turf', was of no commanding intellect, but has been written into fame by the real leader, Disraeli himself. Disraeli contrived to galvanize his friend into great activity, and Bentinck certainly had a considerable capacity for work in spite of his strange habits of feeding, which resembled those of the Snark in 'Lewis Carroll's' poem.² The device on the shield of this amiable pair was that 'the field was lost, but there should be retribution on those who had betrayed it'. Apart from his zeal for the agricultural interest (which most people believed to depend on Protection), Bentinck had, or received from his mentor, some statesmanlike ideas; for instance, he wanted Government to lay railways in Ireland; he wanted to give a pre-

¹ 'And what', says Greville (v. 325), 'is the cause' [of the abuse now showered on Peel]? 'It is because he is wiser than his people, that he knows better than they do what are the true principles of national policy and national economy . . . It was well said that it was his purpose to betray the country into good measures.' Again (vi. 350), 'the sacrifices which he made upon two memorable occasions, upon both of which he unquestionably acted solely with reference to the public good', &c. And it must be remembered that Greville had no personal liking for Peel—rather the reverse.

² 'It being his custom to dine after the House was up, which was very often long after midnight, and this, with the exception of a slender breakfast of dry toast, was his only meal in the twenty-four hours.' (*Life*, 65.)

ference to sugar coming from our West Indies; and, in his last interview with Disraeli,¹ he spoke of wishing for an abolition of all duties between Britain and her Colonies. Whatever might have come of such schemes, they vanished after Bentinck's comparatively early death in the autumn of 1848.

From 1846 to 1855 we can hardly say that there was a Government in this country at all. The Offices of State were held by ill-compacted combinations of 'old-gangers', of various shades of opinion, and through the haze one discerns chiefly the sinister—no, the futile—figure of Lord John Russell, now forming Ministries, now wrecking them from mere peevishness. He was for ever snuffling about 'civil and religious liberty', yet Radicals were inclined to say of him, as that great Radical Machiavelli said of old King Ferdinand, 'of the one and of the other he is the bitterest enemy'. The Repeal of the Corn-Laws did not avert, could not have averted, the Irish Famine, of which neither they, nor any other laws, were in the remotest degree the cause. Could anything have averted it in 1847? Probably nothing. When a population of nearly eight millions has come to depend, more and more with every year, on the produce of one fickle crop,² some such disaster is never far away; there had been a bad foretaste of it in 1822.

In the summer of 1846 the potato was blighted all over the island, but worst in Munster and Connaught. Peel had begun to import maize and had set on foot unproductive public works. Russell succeeded Peel and passed a 'Labour-Rate Act', laying the whole cost on the rates of the district in which employment was to be given. Early in 1847 nearly three-quarters of a million men were being employed on making roads to nowhere, and on draining undrainable bogs. It needed 11,000 gangers to keep these starving

¹ *Life*, 448.

² Sir S. Walpole (iv. 216) points out how the actual amount of food (it is not the best food, very far from it) that can be raised from an acre of potatoes is about double that from an acre of wheat.

labourers at work. The system of outdoor relief was grafted on to the Irish Poor Law, which had been framed only to give indoor relief to the sick and aged. The landlords were ruined by the new rates and by their own prodigal and unfailing charity. 'I mind the time', said the old Galway waiter to Dean Hole, 'and the poor cratur's come crawling in from the country with their faces swollen, and grane, and yallur, along of the 'arbs they'd been ating. . . . I've gone out of a morning and seen them lying dead in the square with the green grass in their mouths.'¹ Relief-kitchens, with hot cooked food, were started on the roads, and these did perhaps the best work of all. Religious hatreds were laid aside, and all classes of Irishmen laboured in the cause of relief. The British Government spent altogether seven millions sterling in charity, and enormous sums poured in from every country in Europe and America. It was not wholly in vain; although large numbers of peasants died, either of starvation or of the diseases that accompanied it, many lives were saved. Many flocked over at once to England and Scotland, and far more to Canada and the United States. The sufferings of these emigrants were great, for no attempt was made at control of the ships that took them. Within six years the population of Ireland had fallen below six millions, and it continued to fall till 1881. The disaster had been, in fact, beyond human control or remedy, though it is possible that, if Melbourne's proposed state railways had been begun in 1839, they would have been so far forward by 1847 that much more life would have been saved. For the want of communications was a severe handicap to the distributors of food.

The Irish 'patriots' displayed no gratitude² for our

¹ *A Little Tour in Ireland*, 1859, 46.

² Cobden said that 'from Ireland he had ceased to hope or fear anything; its utter helplessness to do anything for itself is our great difficulty; you cannot find three Irishmen who will co-operate for any rational object.' (*Life*, 488.) He certainly here expressed the common sense of Englishmen on the subject at a time when Englishmen had not been fooled into losing the courage of their opinions about Ireland.

efforts to help their people. Rebellion was being prepared on the very morrow of the Famine. *The Nation* was superseded by *The United Irishman*, a far fiercer paper. The rebels chose a strange leader, William Smith O'Brien, M.P.,¹ a middle-aged landlord, hitherto of moderate opinions, believed to have the 'blood of old Irish kings' in his veins. He went to France in March '48 to beg help from the newly-established Republic. But Lamartine had his hands too full in Paris to afford a quarrel with London, and the conspiracy had to dree its own weird. It was an orthodox one, after the style of 1794-8, with national guards, pikes, and secret oaths, and the seizure of Dublin Castle as the first object. It found, however, no support from peasants, priests, or O'Connell's tail. Lord Clarendon, who had become Viceroy during the Famine, acted with vigour and discretion. The Habeas Corpus Act was suspended and the leaders were seized. An Act was rushed through Parliament creating the new crime of 'Treason-Felony'—any attempt to 'coerce Queen or Parliament' was to bear that name. John Mitchel was transported for fourteen years: O'Brien, wandering about with a few followers to evade the police, was at last caught in a garden:

Hide, blushing glory, hide
That day among the cabbages.

He was condemned to death, respited, and transported.

In September 1849, at the earnest request of Clarendon, the Queen and Prince Albert visited Ireland, landing successively at the Cove of Cork, Kingstown, and Belfast, and spending four days at the Viceregal Lodge in Dublin. The Queen was enthusiastically received and thoroughly appreciated her reception. Had it been possible, in after years, to persuade her to allow one of her sons to be permanent Viceroy, it is just possible that the future history of the island might have been different.

After 1848 Ireland was as quiet for nearly eighteen years

¹ It was this gentleman who had sworn in 1844 that 'not a drop of intoxicating liquor should pass his lips till the Union was repealed'.

as she is ever likely to be, and Russell took the curious opportunity to lower her county franchise to £5. The truth was that he, who had declared in 1832 that the settlement was 'final', was already playing with the notion of a further dose of 'Reform' for Great Britain. This showed how hopelessly he was out of touch with the real needs of both countries.

His Cabinet of July 1846 lasted till February 1852, and has rightly been called an absurd one, for he had in his favour only a minority of the House, even when he could be sure (and he seldom could be sure) of the support of all the Irish and all the Radicals. His one strong man was his Foreign Secretary Palmerston, aged sixty-two, but Palmerston was already the black sheep to Cobden, who never ceased to pour contempt on all diplomacy;¹ it was, therefore, as in 1835-41, to the magnanimous support of Peel—Peel, whom he, Russell, had just so basely tripped up—that he owed his absence of defeats. Peel was ready to support any one who would keep Protection in the shade. The Election of 1847 brought little change; the Peelites gained more seats than any other party. A proposal to repeal the oaths which excluded Jews from both Houses was met with bitter hostility from nearly all Conservatives, though Gladstone bravely faced the wrath of his own Church friends, and Disraeli risked the first faint whispers of his popularity with the anti-Peelite Tories, by supporting it. The latter had published *Tancred* in the previous spring as a 'protest against Western Materialism'. For ten years to come the 'Jew question' raged, the House of Lords only

¹ 'Let governments have as little, peoples as much, to do with each other as possible.' Cobden had a passion for foreign travel, and had visited America, Russia, and Turkey, as well as most of the nearer countries. He went in order to study statistics of trade, production, and consumption. He believed that an era of universal peace and democracy was about to open. One of his best contributions to political morality was his expressed opinion that private persons were wrong in subscribing to foreign Government loans, especially for such countries as Russia and Austria, 'who will only use the money to make wars'. (*Life*, 552.)

yielding in 1858. There was a bad commercial panic in the same autumn of '47, due to that over-speculation in railway shares which Thackeray so humorously illustrated in the *Diary of Jeames de la Pluche*,¹ as well as in many of his *Punch* poems. In January '48 there was a French invasion scare, and Russell in alarm proposed a great increase of our fighting forces; the old Duke, rightly sensitive to the fact that

Our cannons mouldered on the seaward wall,

¹ The Great Western Railway was opened to Bristol in 1841; the last coach running between London and Bristol was taken off the road in 1844, the last to Plymouth in 1847. 'I heard' (in Jan. 1834) 'wonderful things of railroads and steam when I was in Staffordshire. . . . Stephenson told Lichfield that he could make his engines travel with greater speed than any bird **can** cleave the air, and that he had ascertained that 400 miles an hour was the extreme velocity which the human frame could endure.' (Greville, iii. 54.) In 1838 Lord Shaftesbury (*Life*, i. 237, 257) went to Birmingham by train and thought 'the speed sublime, but the amusement and interest of travel are gone. We shot like an arrow through a dead solitude. . . . I believe it to be much safer than the road and incomparably more dull. . . . It is a just remark that the Devil, if he travelled, would go by train.' In 1843 Mr. Raikes (*Journal*, iv. 299) tells us that M. Isidore, the Queen's *coiffeur*, 'who receives £200 a year for dressing H.M.'s hair twice a day, had gone to London in the morning, meaning to return to Windsor in time for her toilet; on arriving at the Station he was just five minutes too late. . . . The only resource was a special train, for which he was obliged to pay £18; but the establishment, feeling the importance of his business, ordered extra steam to be put on, and conveyed the anxious hairdresser 18 miles in 18 minutes.' The so-called 'Railway Mania' of 1845-7 was a financial scramble as disastrous as that of the South Sea Bubble. *The Times* did excellent service in Delane's early days by exposing the number of bogus companies afloat. In Nov. 1845 there were over twelve hundred railways 'projected'. Mr. *Punch's* celebrated cartoons *The Railway Juggernaut* and *The Railway Speculator at home* belong to this year. The panic of 1847 ruined many people. The career of George Hudson, 'the Railway King', was not in its early stages dishonourable, and several companies owed much to his foresight and courage, but by 1846 his transactions were becoming questionable, although no actual fraud was brought home to him. Two hundred millions of capital had been invested in railways before 1848.

supported him,¹ as did Palmerston, always at fault in realizing the weakness of Louis-Philippe. Palmerston thought that steamships had made possible a sudden descent of 30,000 or 40,000 Frenchmen on the south coast. He therefore wished to fortify all the dockyards and to raise a large Militia for home defence.

The utterly unexpected French Revolution of February 1848 dispelled all these fears, and (such is the nature of British politicians) all the precautions also. Louis-Philippe

Left his royal crown
Which he couldnt travel with,
And without a pound came to English ground
In the name of Mr. Smith.

Disraeli had girded at Palmerston in January for dreading Louis-Philippe as if he were a Napoleon or a Louis XIV.² 'The session of 1848, one of the longest on record, commenced with sugar and ended with sugar. . . . Singular article of produce! what is the reason of this influence? it is that all considerations merge in it, not merely commercial, but imperial, philanthropic, and religious.'³ Russell proposed, and the Protectionists resisted the proposal, to admit slave-raised sugar from Spanish and Portuguese America as freely as that grown by free labour in our own Colonies. Government only won by fifteen votes, and its only argument was the parallel of the slave-raised cotton which Lancashire drew from the United States. Jamaica now entered upon the last stage towards final ruin. The best measure of this Government must not be forgotten, Lord Morpeth's 'Health of Towns Act' of 1848, which created a 'Board of Health' (since 1871 merged in the Local Government Board) with power to appoint inspectors of nuisances; yet too many of the accompanying provisions,

¹ In 1848 the Duke wrote to Sir John Burgoyne an open letter, printed in the *Morning Chronicle*, on the inadequate defences of our southern coast: 'I hope the Almighty may protect me from being witness of the tragedy which I cannot persuade my contemporaries to take measures to avert.'

² *Beaconsfield*, iii. 171.

³ *Bentinck*, 380.

for improved drainage and the like, were allowed to depend on the willingness of the Local Authorities to put the Act in force, and these were apt to shrink from the necessary expenditure. 'A sanitary Bill', wrote Ashley in April 1848,¹ 'would in five years confer more blessings, and obliterate more Chartism, than universal suffrage in half a century.'

The nation might at least be proud of one thing in this year, 1848, for while half the crowns of Europe were shaken from the heads of their wearers, London escaped from its one revolutionary up-spurt in April by the simple expedient of swearing-in 140,000 special constables. The next year, 1849, was marked by the repeal of the last clauses of those Navigation Acts which had once closed British and Colonial ports to foreign shipping. This was really an outcome of the repeal of the Corn-Laws, for our colonists now complained that the Americans could undersell them in British ports.² Liverpool shipowners also cried out for the repeal of the clauses that prohibited them from hiring cheap foreign crews. Even Gladstone spoke against Russell's measure, if no reciprocal advantage were to be granted by the foreigners using our ports, and the Lords very nearly rejected the Bill. True, Adam Smith, who had so warmly defended those laws, had not pretended that the Navigation Acts stimulated commerce; but they had been passed to stimulate something much more important—the growth of a sturdy class of merchant-sailors. Their repeal, in the name of Free-trade, checked the growth of this class, and when in 1854 Aberdeen threw open to foreign ships the coasting trade between our home ports, the last security

¹ *Life*, ii. 243.

² The introduction of steamships on ocean voyages was an enormous factor in Free-trade. The *Sirius* and the *Great Western* made the first steam voyages across the Atlantic in 1838; by 1842 the passage under steam averaged a fortnight, under sail it had seldom been less than a month. The Cunard Line dates from 1840. There was an attempt at a steam passage to India, by the Cape route, as early as 1820, but it was reckoned a failure; the P. & O. Company, founded 1834, began carrying the mails by steamer via the Red Sea in 1841, the dromedary post taking them across the Isthmus of Suez.

which the Acts had afforded, vanished. In 1849 the number of foreign ships entering and clearing from British ports was almost negligible; early in the twentieth century it was 40 per cent. of the whole. Even this is unimportant in comparison with the number of foreign sailors serving in our mercantile marine, simply to put money in the ship-owners' pockets, and with the danger of allowing seamen of foreign (and potentially hostile) nations to become acquainted with the shoals and channels outside our harbours.

The real 'breakers ahead' were on the now submerged rock of Protection. At what date Disraeli realized that no return to this in the near future was possible, it is hard to say; in 1850 he told a private friend that 'Protection was not only dead, but damned'. But he already aspired to be, was in fact already almost recognized as, the leader of the Conservatives (as opposed to the Peelites) in the House of Commons, nor did he ever abandon the hope of winning back the Peelites into the fold. And, as three-fourths of his party cherished secretly, if not openly, the hope of some return to Protection, he had to go with reefed canvas if he were to keep any grip on the helm. His leader in the Lords was his main difficulty. Edward Stanley, fourteenth Earl of Derby, had been the second man to break away from Grey's Government in 1834, and, from that day until his final surrender to Disraeli in 1866, he seemed to have no settled convictions. This was not from intellectual weakness, for by universal consent he had one of the most brilliant minds of his age; as a debater in either House he had no rival, not even Disraeli himself. Disraeli had called him the 'Rupert of debate', but we must not forget that the sentence, in which this epithet was applied in 1844, ended with the words, 'in his charge he is resistless, but when he returns from the pursuit he always finds his camp in the possession of the enemy'.¹ And this brilliant Rupert was apt to be found at Newmarket when he ought to have been at Westminster, or engrossed with his own most

¹ *Beaconsfield*, ii. 237.

scholarly translation of the Iliad instead of Hansard's *Debates* or the Blue Books.

Now Stanley (he became Derby in 1851) readily accepted in 1846 the captaincy of the anti-Peelite Conservatives, and then, from the party point of view, hesitated far too long before he would accept Disraeli as first lieutenant.¹ He blew now hot, now cold, on the question of a possible return to Protection. Yet no reconstruction of the Conservative party would be possible without a united front on that question; and each successive Election from 1847 made it clear that the electors stood for the freest importation of corn. Disraeli, who was quite destitute of rancour, hoped to win the favour of moderate Whigs and moderate Peelites even before Peel's death in 1850, and he soon saw that this involved the avowed abandonment of Protection. He never professed to have changed his own opinion; but he realized that the country had made up its mind for free imports and that his party had better accept that view. It was a *volte-face* on his part, only less startling than that of which he had accused Peel, and we cannot wonder that people were slow to perceive that it was, if it indeed was, a disinterested one. As yet, then, Disraeli was able to appear mainly as a critic, though always a far-sighted critic. In 1849 his statesmanlike proposal to relieve the landowners of half the local rates, throwing the other half on the Exchequer, was beaten by a large majority.

The death of Peel, killed by a fall from his horse in the summer of 1850, left Gladstone, under the shadow of Aberdeen, the real leader of the Peelites, and Gladstone's instinctive jealousy of Disraeli made a reunion of the two Conservative wings less possible than before. Yet Gladstone's own early career had inspired, and was still inspiring, almost as much distrust as Disraeli's; we shall learn more about this when we consider ecclesiastical questions. Gladstone appeared little in the open between 1847 and 1852.

¹ It was in 1847 that Disraeli first sat for the county of Bucks, and began to pose as the 'farmers' friend'; he had previously exchanged his first constituency, Maidstone, for Shrewsbury.

He was already, perhaps mainly out of opposition to Disraeli, feeling his way towards the Radical view of Colonial questions, namely that it would be advisable to grant the Colonies complete Home Rule, if not to cut the painter altogether.¹ And he was already athwart the hawse of Palmerston on foreign politics in all but one place; he and Palmerston began to act together in favour of Italian freedom as early as 1850.

Yet it is difficult to say whether the Whigs were not really greater losers by Peel's death than Peel's own party. After that death, Russell, looking round for some subject which might bring support to his tottering Ministry, began that coquetry with Reform in which he had already made an experiment on the *corpus vile* of Ireland. He declared his intention of introducing a Second Reform Bill; in February 1851 he was in fact beaten, by a combination of Radicals and Conservatives, on a private member's motion on the same subject. Russell never scrupled to throw the country into a mess by a sudden resignation, and he now resigned. Stanley, equally unstable, refused, for his part, to face the music, and so Russell found himself back again in office, though a good deal weakened by the shock. He was beaten on several divisions during the summer of '51, and finally built himself a wall against which he could conveniently run his head by dismissing Palmerston.

The history of this man before 1852 belongs to foreign politics, and must be treated in another chapter; but the point at issue at the end of 1851 has an important domestic bearing also. Melbourne had left Palmerston such a free hand abroad, and the country had, on the whole, been so well satisfied with his management, that he had learned to act too frequently without consulting his colleagues or the Crown. The Crown bitterly resented this, and the more

¹ On the other hand, late in 1851, we find Disraeli writing to Derby of his wish to put in force the scheme, which had been outlined by Bentinck in their last conversation, for a Customs Union with all our Colonies and a representation of these in an Imperial Parliament. (*Beaconsfield*, iii. 333.)

because the Foreign Secretary was now openly displaying his zeal for the liberation of Italy and Hungary¹ from the Austrians. The Prince Consort could never shake off his sympathies with the autocrats of Austria and Prussia. The Queen had long been complaining that Palmerston sent off dispatches which she had not seen, or altered those she had seen.² Now when Louis-Napoleon in December 1851 seized power in France by his celebrated *Coup d'État*, Palmerston, though officially assuming quite a 'correct' attitude, allowed his own sympathies with this new Revolution to transpire in private conversations with the French Ambassador in London. The Queen demanded his dismissal, and Russell supported her demand. The action of each was unconstitutional. The Foreign Office, after being refused by Clarendon, was given to Lord Granville. Perhaps the oddest thing is to find Palmerston on the side of a foreign despot and a Bonaparte. It seems that he had so thoroughly, though wrongly, mistrusted Louis-Philippe, and that he so thoroughly shared the general alarm at the turbulence of the Republic of '48, that he was, for once, in favour of any one who would give France a stable government. Also, no doubt, he knew that it would do him more good than harm with the nation to suffer as a victim of the Germanism of Prince Albert. Having thus weakened himself, Russell,³ wishful to quiet the alarm which ordinary people felt at the very name of 'Napoleon', introduced in February 1852 a Bill to reconstitute the local Militia; and Palmerston, partly in order to 'get his tit-for-tat with John Russell', partly in order to provide against invasion, moved an amendment in favour of a 'national' Militia, on the lines of that

¹ The reception accorded in England to the Hungarian rebel-patriot, Kossuth, made the Court very angry; it was with difficulty that the Cabinet persuaded Palmerston not to receive him at his own house (Oct.-Nov. 1851).

² 'Her (the Queen's) favourite aversions are: first and foremost, Palmerston; and Disraeli next.' (Greville, vi. 390.)

³ 'Lord John soon found that he had sawn away the branch, on which he was sitting, between himself and the tree.' (Paul, *History of Modern England*, i. 241.)

of 1757. This was carried by eleven votes, and Russell again resigned.

This time there was to be a change, though a short-lived one. Lord Derby took office as the head of a Conservative Government, though *Punch*¹ suggested, in a famous cartoon, that he had not decided 'with which horse to win—*Free-Trade* or *Protection*'. Sir Edward Sugden, whose boyhood, like that of Lord Tenterden, had been spent in the barber's shop of his father, became Chancellor as Lord St. Leonards. Disraeli became Chancellor of the Exchequer, not because he knew anything about finance, but to keep him away from the Queen, who entertained a strong prejudice against him. This prejudice he set to work to remove by the flattering, and often amusing, letters in which he gave his mistress an account, night after night, of the events in the House of Commons. It was at least a Cabinet full of new blood, so new that the old Duke, now near his end, could not trust his deaf ear, and exclaimed, 'Who? Who?' as the names of the Ministers were successively told to him. But, with the exception of Disraeli and of Lord Malmesbury at the Foreign Office, the new men were a feeble crew.² Derby tried to get Palmerston to join him, and bravely insisted at Windsor on being allowed to do so; but here as elsewhere he was foiled because he would not make up his mind for which horse to declare. Palmerston, who in 1845 had favoured a low fixed duty on corn, now said there must be no going back on Free-trade and no paltering with the question.

The new Government carried the Militia Bill, much improved and strengthened, and dissolved Parliament in July 1852. But the autumnal Election brought it little new strength,³ simply because people feared that Derby

¹ Vol. xxii, p. 225, June 1852.

² Malmesbury's own opinion of his colleagues was not a high one:— 'Herries looked like an old doctor who has just killed a patient, and Henley like the undertaker who has come to bury him.' (*Memoirs*, i. 278.)

³ There were 310 'Derby-Dizzy' men, 40 Peelites, 40 Irish irreconcilables, 270 Whigs.

had got some protective measure up his sleeve. He had not, though he could not bring himself to acknowledge that he had not. With a heavy heart Disraeli prepared a budget giving some compensation, by remission of certain burdens, to landowners, sugar-growers, and other interests which had been hit by Free-trade, and he proposed to recoup the Exchequer by extending the income-tax to Ireland. It was a sound but not an exciting budget. Gladstone tore it to pieces, and then tossed, gored, and trampled on its fragments with a ferocity wholly unnecessary. Beaten by nineteen votes, Derby resigned, and was probably glad to resign, after holding office for only ten months. Had he been able to hold on for another year it is possible that Disraeli's foresight would have overcome at least one of his leader's scruples; for 'Dizzy' had projected a Bill to secure tenant-right on all Irish estates, and, at that date, this would have gone far to pacify the Irish peasants. Nor must we ever forget—and we have Lord Morley as our authority—that Gladstone would probably have joined Derby, had not his hatred of Disraeli stood in the way. If he had joined he would have brought the other Peelites with him, and the whole subsequent history of England might have been altered.

The departure of Derby was followed by a strange coalition of Whigs and Peelites, with some hope of support both from Radicals and Irish, under Lord Aberdeen. Again it was an 'old gang', or a blend of old gangs. This was made clear when the placable Palmerston took the Home Office, and the rival whom he had so recently upset, Russell, took the Foreign Office, which in a few weeks he surrendered to the abler hands of Clarendon. Their Chancellor was Lord Cranworth, who, though he had already held three high judicial offices, was distinctly below his place. The strength of the forty or fifty Peelites was shown when they claimed, and got, nearly half the seats in the Cabinet.¹ It was rather

¹ The Peelites had recently (1848) acquired a newspaper of their own, the old Whig *Morning Chronicle* having been purchased, no doubt largely with the money of their leaders. It had been the one

cruel of these 'old gangers', who had to admit one Radical (dull, if sound, old Molesworth), not to have given the place either to Cobden or Bright. From the outset the incongruity of this 'Joint Board of Directors' was seen: Aberdeen was a staunch Presbyterian and Gladstone a staunch Puseyite, in a day when the world thought more of religious differences than it does now. Aberdeen had twice held the Foreign Office (1828-30, 1841-6); he remembered the 'old war' quite as well as his rival and exact co-aeval Palmerston; he had been on a diplomatic mission to Austria as early as 1813, and had signed the Treaty of Paris in 1814. But, while Aberdeen exhibited the timidity and hesitation of old age, Palmerston was 'sixty-eight years young'. The one was almost a pacifist; the other had made his name famous by a 'spirited diplomacy', in favour of British subjects and interests, right or wrong, all over the world. The one stood for the map of Europe he had helped to draw in 1814-15, the other wished to recognize young nationalities struggling to tear up that map.

Gladstone at the Exchequer was a tower of strength to any Free-trade Government, and had sat at the feet of a real financial genius, Peel. He was favoured by fortune in his beginnings, for our commercial prosperity was at high tide, and exports had doubled in the preceding five years. He sprang at once into the saddle and swept away, or reduced almost to zero, many of the remaining duties on imports,¹ and then laid a further burden on the groaning landowners by adding a duty on succession to real property. Direct, in place of indirect, taxation was the cry. It has the merit of simplicity, but its danger lies in its possible use as a weapon for crushing out of existence any particular interest against which the legislator may have conceived an aversion. 'Mr. Gladstone budgeted for seven years of peace;

serious rival of *The Times*, but it failed, in its new stable, to keep alongside that paper, and soon died.

¹ Also he abolished the tax on advertisements—what a hideous mistake, fraught with what hideous consequences to town and country!

before seven months were over he was under the shadow of a great war.' Within a fortnight of the accession to power of the Peace-at-any-price Prime Minister, the Tsar was proposing to our ambassador at Petrograd a partition of the Ottoman dominions.

Before we quit domestic politics we must try to picture to ourselves that November day when the Duke of Wellington was laid to rest in St. Paul's, beside Nelson,

Here in streaming London's central roar,
Let the sound of those he wrought for,
And the feet of those he fought for,
Echo round his bones for evermore.

The Duke was more than a figure; he had become an institution. One might quote Tennyson's fine poem at almost any length to illustrate the feeling of the nation towards him. 'It began to rain the day the Duke died, and it continued to rain, rain, rain. The very elements were held to sympathize with the national loss.' So wrote the old Chartist, Cooper.¹ 'The emotion of the vast crowd that lined the streets', said an eyewitness to the present writer, 'was the most tragic, the most *terrible*, thing I ever beheld.' The Duke had not been a successful statesman during his brief tenure of the highest civil office, 1828-30; yet, in office or out of office, he had loyally supported every Ministry so long as it worked for what he considered to be the good of the country. Indeed, he might be accused of having too little withstood changes, of which he entirely disapproved, simply in order to stave off political crises and to 'enable the King's (or Queen's) Government to be carried on'. With a brave inconsistency, the honourable motive of which people often failed to discover, he was ready to act with any statesman, or with any party, which he deemed capable of doing any good or preventing worse evil. He was ready to face any risk rather than that of civil war. He died, after a few days' indisposition, in September, and his funeral was delayed for two months in order to make it the most imposing spectacle of the century.

¹ *Life*, 330.

CHAPTER V

FOREIGN POLITICS, 1832-53

CIVILIZED Europe has frequently been destined, since the sixteenth century, to walk in dread of some one Power which is yet a member of its family. Now it is Spain, now France, now Russia, more recently Germany, that is spinning a web of dominion over other states; and coalitions, often led by England, have been necessary to restrain that Power. England reaped no gratitude from those she saved, for she took her wages in colonial or commercial advantages all over the world. Oftener she was an object of envy, and envy is the parent of hatred. The envy was increased in the nineteenth century, when she not only received and comforted foreign political refugees, but was also observed to be able to weather internal tempests which would have upset the less deeply-rooted, more artificial, governments of other nations. And, on their side, British statesmen were too apt to be surprised at this envy, and to misunderstand its mainsprings. One of Palmerston's odd limitations was his belief that common sense would ultimately prevail in other countries, as (in his time) it did in his own. Cobden, who had otherwise so little in common with Palmerston, shared this delusion. Thus they lacked sympathetic understanding of countries such as Spain, where, as Wellington said, 'two and two do not make four', and where ballot-boxes, if used at all, commonly have false bottoms.

When, in 1815, Napoleonic France had been beaten, the bugbear of the rest of Europe was Russia. Russia, as M. Sorel says, *ne manque jamais de suite dans sa politique*. Before the eighteenth century closed she was across Northern Asia, and early in the nineteenth she was believed to be threatening our Indian possessions. This fear led us into the mistake of trying to control Afghanistan in 1838;

Wellington and Melbourne alike believed that there lay the key to the mastery of Central Asia. The Chartists, for their part, expected a Russian fleet to appear off the coast of Scotland! William IV in his last days had been full of the same idea, and 'even Melbourne seemed to think Russia might possibly send a fleet into the Channel and sweep our seas . . . he seems to have some information.'¹ When Russia was preparing in 1848 to help Austria to crush Hungary, F. D. Maurice² writes of 'a dire Slavonic combination to put down popular sovereignty by the arms of barbarians!' Gladstone, at the opening of the Crimean War, was influenced by a like fear, and even Lord Beaconsfield, towards the end of his life, was obsessed by it, and it was hardly until 1878 that he foresaw the still greater danger from Germany. One statesman alone had estimated Russia more truly; in 1835 Palmerston³ wrote to his brother: 'The fact is that Russia is a great humbug, and, if England were fairly to go to work with her, we could throw her back half a century in one campaign. Nicholas knows this, and will always check his pride and insolence when he finds that England is firmly determined, and fully prepared to resist him.' What a comment is this on Aberdeen's weak policy in 1853!

Nicholas I (1825-55) was certainly a monarch to inspire awe. There wasn't a liberal movement in Europe that he did not yearn to suppress; first and foremost the revolt of Belgium from Holland in 1830. He spoke then as if the Holy Alliance of 1815 was still alive, as if there had never been a Castlereagh to thwart it or a Canning to topple over its fragments. He would probably have sent troops, perhaps in alliance with Prussia, to help the Dutch, had not his own hands been full of a Polish revolt, which he was crushing in merciless fashion in the year of our Reform Bill. Wellington⁴ and Aberdeen disliked the Belgian revolt nearly as

¹ Broughton, *Recollections*, v. 39.

² *Life*, i. 487.

³ Dalling, iii. 5.

⁴ The Duke was right; the breaking up of the Kingdom of the United Netherlands was a bad misfortune for Europe; but the Dutch

much, for they were averse from anything that defaced the map of 1815, but they utterly refused the Dutch request for aid, and, when they resigned in 1830, the settlement fell into the abler hands of Palmerston. The latter got a whole-hearted sympathy from his chief, Grey. To Grey the Belgian revolt was a sort of Whig cause; Palmerston was never wedded to causes, or principles, or systems of alliances, and to him it was sufficient for the day to check now Nicholas, now Louis-Philippe. In 1830 he saw that France must at all costs be prevented from swallowing, under the guise of liberating, Belgium, and he prevented her. The new King of the French was sorely tempted to signalize the accession of his dynasty by reincorporating the first great conquest of the Revolution, for which he himself as a boy had fought so bravely. But he knew, and old Talleyrand, his ambassador in London, knew, that this would mean war with England, and most wisely they refrained; refrained even from accepting a crown for a French Prince. So Leopold of Saxe-Coburg, widower of our Princess Charlotte, became constitutional King of the new Belgium, though it was not till 1839 that the Mynheers acquiesced in the settlement which they were powerless to upset.

What Nicholas really was in the East, Louis-Philippe, in milder guise, aspired to be in the West. And as he knew—must have known—that peace, with the English friendship, was the one thing for France, that civilized Europe rested for its peace on that friendship, he ought to be held to severe account for his love of ‘talking big’. His big talk was always followed by little action. He loved firing off pop-guns and then running away under cover of their smoke. His good qualities (and they were many) were overlaid by low cunning and avarice. But his throne and his life were in constant danger from Republican, Bonapartist, and Carlist plots. ‘Prince Charles-Louis-Napoleon Bonaparte’, nephew of the great Emperor, made two futile attempts to upset that throne, and after each failure found Government had shamefully maltreated the Belgians, who had no resource but revolt.

refuge in England, having on the second occasion endured a long imprisonment. Malmesbury¹ was much in his company in 1840, and learned that 'he had a fixed notion that he would one day govern France', but also saw that he firmly believed in an alliance with England. Raikes² met him at Bath in 1846 and was struck with his 'simple and agreeable manners and well-informed mind', while the Prince amused the old gentleman by telling him scandalous stories against Louis-Philippe. In spite of plots the majority of the French people were probably more free, and better off, during the eighteen years of Louis-Philippe's reign, than ever before or since.³ Once Napoleon I had consolidated the substantial gains of the Revolution (abolition of privilege, free-trade in land, civil and religious equality), the form of their political government has mattered little to our neighbours. The age of great French ministers was past, and there was little difference between the bustling and intriguing Marseillais Thiers and the austere philosopher Guizot. The people that really matter to France are her Victor Hugos, her Balzacs, her Sainte-Beuves, her Pasteurs, and Millets, her men of letters, science, and art. That *Messieurs les Députés* will perpetrate jobs for their friends seems to Frenchmen a natural adjunct of Parliamentary government (as, indeed, they have heard that it is in England). Meanwhile their new King is walking about the streets of Paris like a *bon bourgeois*, and pretending not to see the funny caricatures of himself in the shop-windows.

We were more than once on the brink of being goaded into war with France, over the rising Eastern Question, over the Spanish marriages, over disputes even more trivial. But the French King was always less inclined for the final plunge than were his ministers. Nothing would have pleased Nicholas better than such a war. Most of his

¹ *Memoirs*, i. 121.

² *Journal*, iv. 435.

³ I am quite aware that I am here athwart Mr. F. A. Simpson, *The Rise of Louis-Napoleon*, 1909. His extraordinary antipathy to the Monarchy of July seems to me to impair his judgement on his hero.

diplomacy was directed towards embroiling the two Western Powers. One of the dreariest episodes in history is that of which Mehemet Ali, Pasha of Egypt, was the centre. This clever adventurer, whom Cobden saw, when in 1836 he was investigating the Levantine trade, was set on one of two things, either the substitution of his own for the dynasty of Othman at Constantinople, or, at least, hereditary possession for himself of the Pashaliks of Egypt, Syria, and Palestine. France had been 'interested' in this region since Napoleon's time, if not since Saint Louis's, and Palmerston's eyes were open to the danger, both to our trade and to our Indian Empire, of anything like a French protectorate in the Near East. At the same time he set a certain value on a French alliance, and he hoped to save Turkey, both from Mehemet Ali and from Russia,¹ by acting with France so far as she would go; if she refused his hand he must act without her. France, for her part, hoped for Mehemet's success (in 1838-9 Mehemet's first object seemed within his reach), and went on patronizing him. This compelled Palmerston to sign in 1840 a convention with the three Eastern Powers for the defence of Turkey. The British Fleet appeared on the Syrian coast, bombarded one or two northern ports, and took Acre in three hours.² The result was that early in 1841 Mehemet came to reasonable terms, and was confirmed as hereditary Pasha in Egypt. France, after some bluster, agreed to join the other Powers, and made the treaty a quintuple one. It was not all we had hoped for, but it was a good deal, and no one was more chagrined than Nicholas at having to agree. Wellington

¹ It was almost more dangerous for the Sultan to be 'saved' from Mehemet, or from any one else, by Russian bayonets than to be conquered in open war by Russia. Something like the former of these things happened in 1836, and the grateful Sultan concluded a treaty with Nicholas which more or less put him at the mercy of Russia. Much as Palmerston disliked this treaty, he saw that he had no reasonable grounds for interfering with it.

² 'Forward, you b—y rascals, and fulfil the Prophecies,' said Captain Napier to his storming party. (Grant-Duff, *Diary*, Dec. 30, 1878.)

was always begging Melbourne to strengthen our forces, and Melbourne's own First Lord told him that in the Mediterranean France had twenty-two ships to our seventeen;¹ the Prime Minister, however, was deaf to such warnings, and relied, and, as it proved, not in vain, on the mediation of Leopold of Belgium. Moreover Palmerston knew, though few other people knew, that France had no real desire for war.

Another cause of friction lay in the alternate failures and successes of the Constitutional and Absolutist parties in Spain and Portugal. The names of the degenerate creatures who called themselves kings and queens of these countries do not matter. There was constant civil war in both, and the Absolutist claimant to Lisbon naturally played into the hands of the Absolutist claimant to Madrid. In each country the Constitutionalist claimant just kept atop; in each she was warmly supported by Palmerston, less warmly by France. We allowed a volunteer fleet to help Maria in Portugal in 1833,² and volunteer soldiers—a large force called the 'Spanish Legion', under de Lacy Evans—to help Isabel in Spain, 1835. France did not like this, and began to gravitate towards Isabel's rival, Carlos. The Legion, or what was left of it, was withdrawn in 1837; large numbers had died of starvation and hardship, and it had effected little.

No doubt Palmerston, who hated waste of time, took too little pains to cultivate the *finesses* of diplomacy. Though he could write most elegant letters both in French and Italian, his demands were apt to be direct and in *brusque* language. Old Talleyrand, who had been courted and be-snuffboxed by every monarch in Europe, thought that our Minister treated him too much like a human being,³ and Guizot, who lacked Talleyrand's excuse, made similar com-

¹ *Melbourne Papers*, 464.

² Cobden, never tired of getting his knife into a diplomat, said on a later occasion, 'Why do we interfere in Portugal? if it is her commerce you ask, you are always sure of that, for we take $\frac{1}{5}$ of her port wine, *which no one else would drink if we did not*'. (*Life*, 476.)

³ 'Kept him waiting two hours.' (Greville, iii. 20.)

plaints. No kings ever liked 'Pam', and 'Pam' rather traded on his reputation for *brusquerie*.

Lord Aberdeen, whose five years at the Foreign Office, 1841-6, divided Palmerston's first from his second tenure, made rather pedantic efforts to smooth down all misunderstandings. He was successful in settling a pair of disputes, which at one time looked serious, with the United States, but on each occasion it was by giving way a little farther than Palmerston would have given way.¹ The southern boundary of Canada on the Atlantic side had been in dispute for half a century, and had been fertile in 'frontier incidents', especially during the late Canadian rebellion. It was finally settled in 1842. On the Pacific side Vancouver and Oregon were in question (1843-6); it was of this region that Melbourne said that he was 'd—d if England wanted a country where salmon wouldn't rise to the fly'.² We now kept Vancouver and gave up Oregon. To conciliate France, Aberdeen wisely encouraged the Queen and Prince Consort to exchange visits of courtesy with Louis-Philippe; this pleased the old gentleman, whom the autocrat Nicholas³ treated as a usurper. Yet in the very year of the return visit Louis-Philippe gave us a fresh pin-prick over an unfortunate missionary whom a French naval officer had ill-treated in the Society Islands. And to this was soon added the burning question of the 'Spanish marriages'.

¹ Yet from Palmerston came the first suggestion of an Arbitration Treaty with the United States, to cover all possible sources of dispute by arbitration before resort to war (Letter to Russell, Jan. 20, 1848, Ashley, i. 59). Palmerston knew and said that 'inkshed would prevent bloodshed'.

² It is still more dreadful to read, a little later than this, that one minister, Sir George Cornewall Lewis, was astonished to learn that salmon visited the sea. Lord Panmure, a better fisherman than War minister, thereupon exclaimed, 'Good G—d, with how little wisdom this country is governed!' (*Panmure Papers*, ii. 494.)

³ Nicholas himself paid a sudden and informal visit to England in 1844, and frightened old Louis-Philippe dreadfully by doing so. It also frightened, in another way, the Duke of Wellington, for England was full of Polish refugees, several of whom would cheerfully have shot this mortal foe.

Little Isabel was fourteen in 1843, and her mother, who was anti-British, wanted to marry her and her younger sister to two sons of the French King. The notion was tempting to France; they were all Bourbons of a sort, and it seemed to Guizot to be a revival of the policy of Louis XIV. But we could hardly approve of a fresh attempt to abolish the Pyrenees, seeing how hard John of Marlborough had fought (1702-11) for their maintenance. It was, however, difficult to find other suitable bridegrooms for these young ladies; for, of the Italian branches of the Bourbons (in Naples and Parma), all were, owing to long interbreeding, either weakling-fools, or hardly men at all. Before Peel's fall Aberdeen agreed that the younger sister might marry a French Prince if the Queen married one of the weakling-fools, and Palmerston, on his return in 1846, was too late to checkmate Guizot here. He, however, tried to substitute a Coburg, a relative of our Prince Consort, as one of the bridegrooms; this would, it seemed, be as unacceptable to France as a French Bourbon would be to us. Lord Normanby, our ambassador at Paris, though an Orleanist, was hostile to Guizot, and made everything more difficult by intriguing with M. Thiers; his intrigues actually helped to upset the French monarchy in February 1848. In October 1846 Louis-Philippe gained his object, for Isabel was then suddenly married to her cousin, Don Francis (whom the old French King believed to be incapable of begetting children), and her sister to the French Prince, Montpensier, whose posterity would, therefore, probably reign at Madrid. It is an open secret that Queen Isabel upset this programme by 'making other arrangements', and producing a baby who in time became King of Spain. He was certainly *her* son.¹ Cobden very pertinently asked 'why Kings and Queens should be allowed to enter marriage-compacts in the names of their peoples'.

¹ 'Vous ne savez pas ce que c'est que ces princesses espagnoles; elles ont le diable au corps, et on a toujours dit que, si nous ne nous hâtions pas, l'héritier viendrait avant le mari.' So said Guizot to Greville in January 1847 (Greville, vi. 30).

Palmerston, then, could hardly help watching Guizot's proceedings with anxiety, and he almost welcomed the Revolution of February 1848 because it finished off Louis-Philippe. The Republic was soon to deepen his anxiety, and though, as we know, he welcomed the advent of Louis-Napoleon to power,¹ he never really trusted him even when he was our ally in the Crimean War. Palmerston was soon, however, engaged in the question which was to interest his old age more than any other—the liberation of Italy from the Austrians. In this matter he was quite as much athwart the British Court as athwart the Austrian Government. The Queen's wrath with him in 1851 was not upon the mere form of his dispatches, but because her husband knew him to be anti-German and a favourer of Italian aspirations. Palmerston's attention had perhaps been first directed to these in 1833 when his brother was British envoy at the Neapolitan Court. The misgovernment of Naples, Modena, and the Papal States, all under Austrian protection, leaped to the eyes, nor were things much better in Austrian Lombardy or Austrian Venetia. Those of us who have struggled with our Browning know what Italians felt, and what their English sympathizers felt, towards Prince Metternich, who was regarded as Austria incarnate. A brighter era for Italy seemed to dawn with the election of Pius IX in 1846. A liberal Pope! and revolutions broke out, or were on the point of breaking out, in almost every Italian State. For a moment it looked as if Pius were going to put himself at the head of a National Federation, but these hopes soon vanished. The Jesuits had said 'No'. The Pope ran away into Neapolitan territory, and the Romans forthwith set up a Republic.

Palmerston was quite ready to recognize the French Republic, and to prevent, if necessary, any Power from

¹ Louis-Napoleon was elected President of the French Republic on Dec. 20, 1848, by a large majority of votes over his honest and honourable competitor Cavaignac. Little doubt was thenceforward felt, even before the *Coup d'État* of 1851, that he would soon make himself Emperor, and in December 1852 he did so.

interfering in French concerns. But he also intended to prevent France from interfering in the concerns of other nations, unless it were to be on the right side in Italy. He feared that the 'Men of '48' might imitate the 'Men of '92' and hurl themselves on Belgium; there were Belgian republicans inviting them to do this. If, however, Metternich should send Austrian forces to crush Italian revolts, Palmerston hoped that France would fight Austria, and he almost hinted¹ that England would be found at France's side. Unfortunately the Italians felt so sure of winning that they rejected a proffer of French help; and they were already quarrelling *inter se*, the Republicans distrusting the House of Savoy, in whose leadership all the wisest Italians discerned the best chance for a united Italy. By the autumn of '48 the Austrian General Radetzky was reconquering Lombardy, and his Government spurned all French and British offers of mediation. Austria, in fact, would have finished off the Italian nationalists more quickly than she did, but for a fierce insurrection of her own Hungarian subjects, to suppress which she had to call in the aid of Nicholas himself. The disastrous battle of Novara in the spring of 1849 threw back the liberation of Italy for a decade. And Palmerston had never contemplated that Louis-Napoleon, as President of the French Republic, would in 1849, in order to conciliate French Catholics, send troops to crush the Roman Republic.

Yet what a cause that of Italy was, and how much the best and biggest cause in Europe between 1815 and 1914! If the result, after the triumph of that cause in 1870, has been disappointing, it is perhaps only a commentary on the littleness of all human causes and on the meannesses of human nature. Palmerston was right to refuse to go to war alone for the liberation of Italy, and he was at least able to stiffen the Sultan's back into refusal to surrender those Hungarian refugees who had fled to Turkey from the wrath of Austria and Nicholas, though it needed the appearance of British warships off the Dardanelles to effect even

¹ Letter to Ponsonby at Vienna, Feb. 11, 1848, Ashley, i. 63.

this. The Neapolitan Bourbons, who in 1847 had shown some Italian sympathies, had soon repented of their liberalism, and their prisons were full of patriots, who were being very badly treated when in the autumn of 1850 Mr. Gladstone happened to pay a visit to Naples. Gladstone's soul took fire at the tales of cruelty that he then heard, and he determined to let Europe know something of the ways of Austrian-protected princelings, whom Palmerston had already denounced the year before. Much as he disliked Palmerston, he could not fail to be pleased when the Foreign Secretary circulated his letters on Neapolitan atrocities to all the courts of Europe. But Gladstone's friend, Aberdeen, was by no means pleased.

During the greater part of his second tenure, 1846-51, Palmerston showed himself rather indifferent to the criticisms of his colleagues. He came once more athwart the French in 1847-50 by bullying the Greek Government, which had ill-treated certain British subjects. King Otho of Greece had played the part of Ahab, and Mr. Finlay, the historian, that of Naboth; but far less defensible than Naboth was a Gibraltar Jew called 'Don Pacifico', who sent in to the Greek Government a monstrous bill for some slight, if real, injuries inflicted on him. Palmerston at first supported the whole of his demands, and sent a squadron to the Piraeus to seize Greek ships. The French had been backing Otho throughout, and Palmerston at last, rather grudgingly, accepted their mediation. It was one of those instances in which his 'ultra-British' attitude was somewhat overdone, and Mr. Pacifico (who was no more a Don than he was an honest man) was certainly a sorry client. Palmerston earned a vote of censure in the Lords (1850), but the Lower House supported him, and, when he there made a very able defence of his policy, Sir Robert Peel, in one of his last speeches, said, 'We have had many differences from the Noble Lord, but the country is proud of him'. It was in these debates that Gladstone first crossed swords with Palmerston.

In '50 and '51 we had no reason to be dissatisfied with

Louis-Napoleon's attitude, and so Palmerston need not be accused of total blindness when he welcomed the *Coup d'État*.¹ He did not, however, trust the 'Prince-President' far, and, when early in '52 he himself turned out the Government that had dismissed him, he told the incoming Foreign Secretary, Malmesbury, that 'Napoleon must keep his popularity, and God knows what he may do to keep it'. To keep well with France, but to look well, and better, to our own defences, was his advice, as it was also the advice of the aged Duke of Wellington. Malmesbury, though he acknowledged that some desire to redraw the map of 1815 was never far from Napoleon's brain, always believed that he would shrink from risking a breach with us. Malmesbury also thought that Russia had some real grievance against Napoleon, when the latter, to please the French Catholics, began to complain of the unfair treatment of Latin-Church monks in the Holy Land. For these, in comparison with those of the Greek Church, were very few. The dispute 'which set of monks should have the keys of certain doors', was surely a small matter to set Europe ablaze; but, as Aristotle says, revolutions arise not because of little causes but from little incidents. There is a story,² which, however, lacks confirmation, that Nicholas, on his visit to England in 1844, had got Aberdeen's signature, as well as Peel's and Wellington's, to a document recognizing Russia's paramount right to the 'guardianship of the Holy Places'. The real question at issue in 1853 was the fate of Turkey.

Was Palmerston right to take the Home Office in Aberdeen's Government? He certainly made an excellent

¹ The news came by the new electric telegraph, whose cable had just been laid between France and England. The first successful experiment with this invention had been between two London stations of the infant North-Western Railway, in 1837. In 1847 the Queen's Speech was first transmitted to the chief towns in Britain by telegraph at the rate of 430 words per hour. The cable to America was only got working, after several failures, in 1866; in the previous year telegraphic communication was opened to India, but was not completed till 1870.

² It is told by Malmesbury, *Mem.* i. 402.

Home Secretary¹ (and that is why some Radical historians avoid mentioning his tenure of the post), for it is a post in which common sense is the most valuable of all qualities. Yet he must have known the weakness of the new Prime Minister, and might have guessed that he would fail to avert war. If Palmerston had been in his old office he would have spoken to Nicholas in other fashion, and would almost certainly have averted it. When in December '53 he resigned and then withdrew his resignation, he allowed the world to think it was about Russell's projected Reform Bill; but the initiated knew that it was because he was dissatisfied with the ministerial handling of the Eastern Question.

¹ Especially when, in reply to an address from the Presbytery of Edinburgh, begging him to appoint a national fast to avert God's wrath, manifested in an epidemic of cholera, he advised them to drain and cleanse the slums of their city as a preliminary measure, and 'when man has done his utmost for his own safety, then is the time to invoke the blessing of Heaven to give effect to his exertions'. (Ashley, ii. 14.) Some years afterwards (1857) Palmerston, as Prime Minister, insisted on throwing Hyde Park as open as possible; 'away with your iron hurdles,' he said, 'the grass was made for people to walk on.' (Dalling, iii. 413.)

CHAPTER VI

CHURCH QUESTIONS

ON August 1st, 1841, Sir Robert Peel wrote to Lord Ashley, 'I have read some [religious] controversies of late which have made me rejoice that the parties to them have no other power over their neighbour than to abuse and defame him'.¹ And, indeed, one would hesitate to specify the punishment which Dr. Phillpotts would have liked to apply to Mr. Gorham in 1850, or Dr. Pusey to Mr. Jowett in 1862, while High and Low Churchmen alike would probably have given short shrift to Dr. Hampden a few years earlier.

At the date of the Reform Bill the 'Evangelical' party in the Church of England was beginning to lose its hold on the country. Its adherents were called 'Simeonites', from the Rev. Charles Simeon of King's, Cambridge; or the 'Clapham School', from the residence of many of its wealthier members in that pleasant suburb; or the 'Saints', from their interest in foreign missions and the emancipation of slaves. Wilberforce, cultivated and cheerful man as he was, was also a typical 'saint'. They were loyal members of the Church, though dogmatically they differed little from the Wesleyans, whom only their founder's own rash act² had cut off from her communion. Nor did these differ doctrinally from the 'Congregationalists', as the descendants of Oliver's old 'Independents' were now called, nor, except in retaining infant baptism, from the Baptists, nor from either party, 'Evangelical' or 'Moderate', among the Scottish Presbyterians. The doctrine of election, in a form far less rigid than that originally enunciated by Calvin, was a common ground for all the above, though the Wesleyan Methodists repudiated it in name. On the other hand, the majority of the English Presbyterians of the seventeenth century had

¹ Shaftesbury, *Life*, i. 347-8.

² See vol. iv, p. 225.

drifted, during the eighteenth, into Unitarianism, and it was in a Unitarian family that one of the best clergymen of the English Church in the nineteenth century, Frederick Maurice, was born in the year of Trafalgar.

The literal interpretation and the paramount authority of the 'plain words of Scripture' were articles of faith to all 'Evangelicals', and it never seems to have dawned upon them that these were not the same thing as the 'tradition of the Church'. The English and Scottish Roman Catholics, who could have told them something about that tradition, kept entirely to themselves, and were, besides, a negligible quantity. French-Revolutionary atheism had found little echo among educated people in England, though it appealed to some aggressive Radicals in the lower strata of society, and spread into some volume during the Chartist movement. The worst feature of the period was the utter want of religious, or any other, education for the ever-growing multitudes in the great towns.

Thackeray has satirized, perhaps unduly, the great ladies who sat under fashionable preachers at 'Lady Whittlesea's Chapel, Mayfair' and elsewhere; who distributed tracts of their own composition to 'their less-favoured brethren and sisters', and sang hymns expressive of their desire to be borne to some sunny isle,

Where the skies for ever smile
And the blacks for ever weep.

The less honest among such people, no doubt, looked on the Bible as a 'book to keep the poor in order', but there was much simple, if ignorant, piety, and still more philanthropy, among the best of them. But there was no learning at all in the party, no idea of any expansion of the Christian Faith, no receptivity of fresh revelations such as science was just beginning to offer concerning the early history of life on our planet. The Bible said that the world was created in six days, that pairs of all living things walked harmoniously into and out of the ark, and that Jonah passed seventy-two hours in the belly of a great 'fish'; therefore

all these things must be true. If strange fossil bones were found in rocks, God must have put them there, in order to try the faith of His elect, when He created the world. As Sir Spencer Walpole points out, these good people also took their conception of the Trinity far more from *Paradise Lost* than from the Bible, failing at the same time to perceive that Milton was at least an Arian.

Yet

Search where thou wilt, and let thy reason go,
To ransom truth, even to th' abyss below;
Rally the scattered causes; and that line
Which nature twists be able to untwine:
It is thy Maker's will, for unto none
But unto reason will He e'er be known.¹

It was to learning of some kind that the Church of England, as all other Churches, would ultimately have to look, if it were to endure. The great misfortune of the Dissenting communities during the first eighty years of the nineteenth century was that they had comparatively little learning. Within the Church there were one or two men of wide reading, like Routh,² the President of Magdalen (the last man in England who habitually wore a wig), who belonged to no school, but could open his stores of knowledge to all. Another great force in the Oxford of the twenties was Whately, afterwards Archbishop of Dublin. He, too, was *sui generis*, a great Aristotelian, a liberal and a philosopher, who had a conception of an almost independent Church. Then there was Thomas Arnold,³ the famous head master of Rugby, 1827-42, the founder of the school afterwards called 'Broad Church'. To him all orders and all rites were things of human institution, and he wanted to unite into one national Church all who confessed the Divinity of Christ; it

¹ Sir Thomas Browne, *Religio Medici*, ed. 1643.

² Routh died in 1854:

Vixit per centum Martinus Routhius annos,
Annos bis centum vivere qui voluit.

³ His pamphlet, *The Principles of Comprehension*, was published in 1833.

was an ideal too high for his age, and has not even yet been reached.

At the feet of Whately had sat a young Fellow of Oriel, John Henry Newman, who became Vicar of St. Mary's, Oxford (the 'University church'), in 1828. He was then hardly known to another member of his College, John Keble, the scholarly Professor of Poetry, who had ceased to reside five years before. Newman and Keble were brought together by Richard Froude about that year; the two latter were strong Tories and opened Newman's eyes to the dangers threatening the Church from the spirit of 'Liberalism'.¹ Once united, these three became the founders of the 'High Church', otherwise called the 'Tractarian', or, more shortly, the 'Oxford', Movement. Froude was the most courageous, or the most reckless, of the three. They sprang into the arena with their doctrines full blown, and declared that these doctrines were not new. They professed to be taking their stand both against the Evangelicals, who were so dangerously akin to Dissenters, and against the 'High-and-dry' school, represented by most of the bishops and heads of Colleges at both Universities, who seemed to lack spiritual fervour. They professed to be going back to the position of those great Anglican divines who had had their last fling in the golden days of Charles I and Archbishop Laud. These had notoriously thought that the Reformation in the sixteenth century had gone too far, and, though repudiating the claims of Rome to supremacy, had sanctioned some Roman (or, at least, pre-Reformation) practices and beliefs. But they had been submerged in the schism of the Non-Jurors in 1689.

The chronological starting-point of the Oxford Movement was a sermon, preached by Keble in St. Mary's in July 1833, and soon afterwards published with the ominous title *National Apostasy*. A few days later, at a meeting of three or four sympathizing friends at an Essex rectory, it was agreed to publish a series of *Tracts for the Times*, to awaken

¹ The word, as applied to any party, is of French or Italian origin; it was used in English theology before it was used in English politics.

the clergy to a higher conception of their duties. The first appeared in September, and the series continued, chiefly from the pen of Newman, until the famous *Tract XC* in 1841. Froude, gleefully but unwisely, spoke of this meeting as a 'conspiracy', and contemporary, if hostile, opinion considered this a fitting name. Newman's sermons at St. Mary's developed the scheme, and the Review which he edited, the *British Critic*, spread the knowledge of it over England. Dr. Pusey, Regius Professor of Hebrew, a learned Orientalist, joined the others in 1835, and gave to the party cohesion, fame, and a name. Froude died in 1836, the *enfant gâté* of the movement, and the publication of his *Remains* two years later, showing the hysterical spirit of revolt that had consumed him, shocked reflective people a good deal. Keble was too gentle, too mystical, for a leader. Newman, by far the most lovable in character, was too subtle in intellect, and externally too meek; fairly early, also (he confesses to 1839), he began to have doubts whither his own feet were to be led.¹ Pusey alone had no doubts, and in his serene self-confidence he became an ideal leader for the new party.

Briefly what these men sought, and claimed to find, was an Infallible Church, with all its doctrines, orders, rites, and ceremonies, delivered once for all to the Apostles, and by them handed on to the 'Fathers'. Obedience to this Church was essential, and a doctrine was to be accepted, not because it was reasonable, but because it was 'patristic' (and therefore Apostolic). As Maurice² afterwards said, 'they want to substitute the spirit of submission to Church authority for the spirit of deep and earnest reflection'. Thus, although they had far more specialist learning than the Evangelicals,

¹ Moreover, his *Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*, begun early in 1845 and left unfinished when he joined the Roman Church that autumn, contains passages which might fairly be quoted against his own party. In his old age, and no doubt in disgust at the rigid obscurantism of the Vatican, he was inclined to go a great deal farther than most English High Churchmen in accepting the revelations of Science and of recent Biblical Scholarship.

² *Life*, i. 226.

the standpoint of the Puseyites was a similar one to theirs, that there can be no change in religious faith or doctrine; the difference being that for the Bible is substituted an intangible, but continuously inspired, body called 'The Church'. Alike for the solution of the gravest question of theology and for the use or non-use of some particular 'vestment', the appeal is to the authority of some Council that was held, of some Greek or Latin 'Father' who lived, in the infancy of that Church. This is in truth the principle on which the Roman Papacy is founded, and the adoption of this standard by the new party led its members naturally, if at first unconsciously, nearer to Rome. From the beginning they admitted that Rome, though she had greatly erred, was a branch of the true Church, and (for as yet they hardly mentioned the Eastern Communion) that there was no other except the English. Why not? Because no other Church claimed that its orders were based on direct succession from the Apostles. That Ordinal was the cardinal point.

For two reasons it was not a bad point from which to start: first, because a person who could bring himself to believe in the Apostolic Succession of our bishops would find little difficulty in accepting any consequent doctrine, and, secondly, because it exalted bishops and priests far above kings, parliaments, and all other laymen. But, when, in September 1833, this doctrine was presented to the Bishops in *Tract No. I*, they were a little startled at the loftiness of the position claimed for them. 'The doctrine might be found, in some shade of black-upon-white, in the Prayer-book?' 'Yes, no doubt, but . . .' Before the end of the nineteenth century most of the English bishops had complacently accepted their elevation. The lesser clergy, with less at stake, would have been more than human if they had refused to accept it. It showed them what Dissenters really were, not, as the best of the Evangelicals had thought, brethren differing from themselves only in some slight points of church government, but wilful schismatics, who preferred darkness to light; and schism was the most mortal of all sins. It showed them also the immeasurable gulf between

themselves and the laity. It made them 'real priests' again, mediators between God and man, not mere 'sky-pilots' or specialist teachers of religion.

All the other new doctrines were but pendants to these, but some of them touched, and some of them alarmed, the majority of intelligent laymen even more. Such were the insistence on the Real Presence in the elements at the Communion, stopping only just short of the Roman doctrine of transubstantiation: the duty of auricular confession to a priest: the excellence of a celibate clergy: the establishment of Sisterhoods for devout women: the duty of fasting at special seasons: the duty of devotion to particular saints. These doctrines made steady headway among the most active and devoted of our clergy, and captured a considerable minority of lay opinion also. The early Tractarians had been men of real, if specialist, learning, and had seldom been ritualists; but, from the middle of the century onwards, the learning of the clergy steadily decreased, and a series of elaborate changes in ritual were gradually introduced, many of them in deliberate imitation of Rome, and in ignorance of the probability that much of the ritual of the early Church had been taken over bodily from dying Pagan creeds. The result of the whole Movement has been that large numbers of English laymen, however anxious they may be to co-operate with the clergy in good works, have lost all confidence in their parish ministers and all interest in ecclesiastical matters; and the gulf between clerics and laymen, owing both to the spiritual claims of the former and to their antics in church, has widened every day, and is now probably impassable.¹

It was quite true that in 1830 there was need of a great reawakening of intellectual and spiritual force in religion; and it was true that the Whigs intended to 'take the church in hand', and partially took it. Disestablishment and disendow-

¹ 'For this was still his simple plan,
To have with clergymen to do
As little as a Christian can.'

Sir F. H. Doyle.

ment were in the air.¹ Redistribution of clerical wealth was really needed, and it was to avert worse measures that ten Irish bishopricks were suppressed in 1833, that Maynooth was endowed in 1845, that Dissenters were allowed to be married in their own chapels, that the Ecclesiastical Commission was appointed to equalize as far as possible the revenues of the English sees (1836). Phillpotts, the fierce antagonist of the Reform Bill, had declared that he could not accept the bishoprick of Exeter, whose revenue was £3,000 a year, unless he were allowed to hold with it the living of Stanhope-in-Weardale (County Durham), worth £4,000. The revenue of the last 'Prince-Bishop' of Durham, van Mildert,² who died in 1836, was between £18,000 and £19,000. Henceforth no person was to hold two livings of the aggregate value of £1,000 a year more than ten miles apart. The first of a long series of new bishopricks was created at Ripon. None of these reforms of Grey and Melbourne need have agitated either the old High-and-dry or the new High Churchmen, but all did agitate them, and the foundation of London University (1836), without any religious tests for membership, agitated them still more. This at least stimulated them to found, as a rival in London, King's College, confined to members of the Church of England, and such a foundation was all to the good. And the Church had still sufficient influence in Parliament to wreck the Appropriation Clause,³ to prevent till 1857 the legalizing of divorce, and to maintain Church rates till 1868.³ Finally it was able to keep degrees at the two older Universities practically closed to all Dissenters till 1871.

This was because, till 1854, no person could matriculate at Oxford, and till 1871 no one could take a Master's degree

¹ 'The real question between 1830 and 1840', said the Duke of Wellington, 'was Church or No Church.' (Morley's *Gladstone*, i. 155.)

² Van Mildert was not only learned and pious, but a most generous dispenser of his vast wealth, out of which he largely endowed the University of Durham.

³ *Vid. sup.* p. 118. The Vestry of any parish had the power to levy a rate on the residents, irrespective of their creed, for the maintenance of the fabric of the parish church.

at Oxford or become a member of the Senate at Cambridge, without subscribing his belief in the Thirty-nine Articles, which dated from 1563. It was over this point that in 1834 the first of the struggles within the Church took place. For an Oxford theologian, Dr. Hampden, proposed to abolish this compulsory subscription to the Articles, and the Convocation¹ of the University rejected his proposal by a large majority. Two years later Melbourne appointed Hampden Regius Professor of Divinity. Thereupon both Archbishops waited on the Prime Minister to explain to him that Hampden was a 'heretic': but Melbourne, whose curious stores of learning included not a little patristic theology, politely asked them to point out any special passages in Hampden's works which could be fairly called heretical,² and they were unable to comply with his request. Both Puseyites and Simeonites combined against Hampden, and, though they were unable to deprive him of his professorship, deprived him of that control of the University pulpit which was attached to his office. Arnold denounced their intolerance in a sharp article in the *Edinburgh Review*.

In 1838 Newman contested the proposal to build in

¹ The 'Privy Council', so to speak, or perhaps the 'House of Lords', of the University, then consisted of all the Heads of Colleges; Convocation, consisting of all Masters of Arts, was its 'House of Commons'.

² Hampden's particular 'heresy' seems to have been the denial of divine origin to any form of Church Government or service; he was admitted to be quite orthodox on doctrine. Wilberforce's son Samuel, afterwards famous as Bishop of Oxford, after taking a leading part against Hampden, admitted that he had never read the work on which the charge of heresy was based. (Walpole, iv. 436, note.) Melbourne also administered a courteous snub to Pusey (who had remonstrated against Hampden's appointment) on the subject of 'certain tenets which have, I believe, been published anonymously' (the *Tracts*) 'but with which you are supposed to have some connexion, and which are represented to me to be of novel character and inconsistent with the hitherto received doctrines of the Church of England . . . the danger of religious zeal is the spirit of ill will, hatred, and malice, of intolerance and persecution, which, in its own warmth and sincerity, it is too apt to engender.' (*Melbourne Papers*, 502.)

Oxford a Memorial to the three Protestant bishops whom Queen Mary had burned there in 1555-6, though even Pusey had not been hostile to this. And the Tracts continued to appear and excited an ever-growing attention and an ever-growing hostility. They culminated in the celebrated No. XC in Feb. 1841. In this Newman argued that the Roman and Anglican doctrines were mutually reconcilable. 'It is', says Walpole,¹ 'one of the most melancholy books ever written . . . the attempt of a good man to justify his continuance in a church, whose teaching he disliked, by placing upon words an interpretation which they cannot bear.' Next month the Tract was condemned by the Council of Heads, and strong language, the language of persecution, was used against the 'new sect'. Two years later Pusey himself, for a sermon on the doctrine of the Communion, was suspended from the University pulpit. Many of Newman's disciples, especially the rash and flippant Mr. Ward of Balliol, spoke with voices less cautious than their leaders, and some secessions to the Roman Church began to point the way which, it was then believed, the whole following would soon take. At the end of 1841 the establishment of a Protestant bishoprick at Jerusalem, to be in communion with German Lutherans, seemed to Newman to be a terrible act of 'national apostasy'. In 1843 he gave up his living, and went with a few friends into a semi-monastic retreat at Littlemore, three miles away. Ward was believed to be pushing him more rapidly in the Roman direction than he was inclined to go. Dean Church, in his *Oxford Movement*,² says that Newman 'had to go Mr. Ward's pace, not his own'. It was Ward who was always crying out for celibate communities of priests, though at the very crisis of the struggle he rather upset his friends by his own marriage. It was Ward, too, who invented the fatal theory, so convenient for controversialists, that the words of any particular doctrine might honestly be accepted 'in a non-natural sense'. In his *Ideal of a Christian Church*, published in 1844, he says that Rome alone satisfies that ideal, yet that a man who holds all

¹ iv. 426.² p. 315.

the doctrines of Rome may subscribe the English Articles, and hold on to his benefice in the English Church. This was the turning-point: not only Council but Convocation condemned Ward's doctrine and deprived him of his degree. Newman thereon threw up the sponge and joined the Church of Rome in October 1845.¹ Ward and many others followed him thither, and, in fact, a stream of conversions, both of clergy and laity, continued until the eve of the Crimean War.

No doubt the hard language used, both officially and unofficially, against the Tractarians had much to do with these secessions. The movement was so unnatural, so un-English, that, if left alone, it would probably have been confined within a slender and a shrinking channel. Maurice, who records² his own narrow escape from the meshes of the Puseyite net, said in 1845 that 'there was nothing that Ward would more earnestly desire than that his opponents should be betrayed into such an act of madness' [*sc.* as the condemnation of his book], and calls that condemnation 'an audacious introduction of a censorship into our English schools. . . . Those who most dislike Ward's sentiments ought, above all others, to protest against it',³ and he did protest. But Maurice stood almost alone at that date, and in after life he constantly incurred the hostility of fanatics by defending his own opponents, and stating their views fairly, before demolishing their arguments; he had a passion for throwing himself athwart currents of popular opinion. His was in fact to be the standpoint of all the best of Arnold's successors, though few preached or practised the same charity as Maurice.⁴

While their early followers were thus falling away, Keble

¹ His *Apologia pro Vita Sua* did not appear till 1864, and its perfectly felicitous style and beauty of language produced a great revulsion of feeling in favour of its author.

² *Life*, i. 186.

³ *Ibid.*, i. 391.

⁴ Yet the strangest and saddest of all theological misfortunes is that Maurice himself in 1862 broke off his friendship with Bishop Colenso, who had impugned the historical truth of some of the books of the Old Testament.

and Pusey remained in possession of their benefices, though the former took little part in controversies. Pusey fought every battle, winning or losing, with the same cheerful courage, and in the same lofty spirit. He issued his mandates *urbi et orbi* as if he were an Innocent III or a Gregory VII. In 1847 Lord John Russell, a fanatic on the other side, and without Pusey's excuse of knowing something about Church History, threw down a fresh apple of discord by nominating Hampden to the Bishoprick of Hereford; the Dean and Chapter of that cathedral fought hard before obeying the royal mandate to elect him.¹ In 1850, after a long controversy, Phillpotts was defeated in his attempt to refuse to institute to a living a Mr. Gorham, who had been rash enough to maintain that all babies dying before baptism are not necessarily damned. The highest episcopal Court had given judgement for Phillpotts, and it needed the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council to reverse this decision and hold out a hope to the babies. Pusey was dreadfully distressed at this, and Gladstone's two great friends, Hope and Manning,² hastened to take refuge in the Church of Rome, where such heresies as Gorham's would find no toleration. Gladstone's sister had become a Catholic in 1845. 'Some say that Gladstone has already joined Rome,' wrote Disraeli to Lady Londonderry,³ in April 1851. Such news, alas, was too good to be true.

In the autumn of 1850 the Pope put forward an 'Encyclical' letter dividing England into Catholic dioceses. The wording of it was ill-judged, for it 'represented England as

¹ Had they failed to comply they would have become liable to the penalties of *praemunire*, that is forfeiture of goods, and imprisonment for life. (Pollard, *Evolution of Parliament*, 187.)

² Strange, for it was Manning, extreme Puseyite though he was, who had told Gladstone in 1845 that the 'common bond of those who seceded to Rome in that year was their want of truth'. (Morley, *Gladstone*, i. 317.) In 1850 Gladstone professed to be remaining in public life only in order to save the Church.

³ Just a year before this Disraeli wrote to the same lady, 'Gracious Majesty was much excited and clapped her hands for joy at the final ruling in the Gorham Case'. (*Beaconsfield*, iii. 248.)

a land of benighted heathens',¹ yet an English statesman should have treated it with courteous indifference. Instead of doing so, Russell played 'the Naughty Boy who chalked up *No Popery* on a door and then ran away'.² He introduced, early in 1851, his 'Ecclesiastical Titles Bill', to prohibit Catholic bishops from bearing diocesan titles in Great Britain. Cobden was particularly angry at this 'concession to the bigotry of England and Scotland, which provoked the just resentment of Ireland'.³ It was, indeed, a *brutum fulmen*, for no one could prevent even the Caliph from nominating *imaums* and *muezzins* in this country if it would amuse that potentate to do so. But the sting in the tail of the 'Durham Letter', which Russell issued in November 1850 as a preface to his Bill, was in the scolding he administered to the Puseyites on 'English clergymen, who, having subscribed the Thirty-nine Articles, have been most forward in leading their flocks step by step to the verge of the precipice', and have thus encouraged Rome to her aggression by their 'mummeries of superstition'. A fierce wave of Protestant fanaticism swept over the island. But it died away as quickly; and it contributed as little to help Russell's tottering Government at the time, as to save his reputation with posterity. The old English Catholics were much distressed at the Pope's letter; Cardinal Wiseman,⁴

¹ Ashley, *Palmerston*, i. 246.

² *Punch*, vol. xx, p. 118. That most delightful artist Richard Doyle left the 'mahogany-tree' of *Punch* in Nov. 1850 because of *Punch's* attacks on the Catholics.

³ *Life*, 550. It may have been in order to play to the Protestant gallery in Great Britain that, in June 1850, Russell abolished the Sunday delivery of post-office letters, but the outcry against this was so great that the delivery had to be restored before the end of the year. Eight years earlier, when the shareholders of the Edinburgh-Glasgow Railway had voted in favour of one train each way on Sunday, there was such an outcry in the religious newspapers ('this is the most momentous day in Scotland for centuries, an object of interest both in Heaven and in Hell' [Irving, *Annals of Our Time*, Feb. 22, 1842]) that the Directors had to veto it.

⁴ Greville as far back as 1841 'met Dr. Wiseman at dinner, a smooth, oily, and agreeable priest . . . in full episcopal costume,

the new 'Archbishop of Westminster', was very ill received by them.

In 1853 Lord Aberdeen, under Gladstone's influence, allowed the Convocations of Canterbury and York, after a suspension of 135 years, to meet and hold debates. Phillpotts and Wilberforce had long been agitating for this, and it was probably a wise move to allow it (as a safety-valve for theological passion) as long as complete control of Parliament over the Church was maintained. The debates in Convocation are often interesting to read and are perfectly harmless, because the speakers and voters are without any coercive power. The meetings were not regularly held till 1861, and two of their earliest exploits were to denounce *Essays and Reviews*, and to fall on Colenso.

The last display of theological bitterness before the Crimean War was to fall upon the head of Maurice himself. Born a Unitarian, Maurice had rallied in 1831 to the Church of England, as the most comprehensive fold then open, and had been the friend of all open-minded intellectuals at both Universities. Though also the friend and adviser of many extreme Radicals, in the 'Christian Socialist' and 'Christian Chartist' causes, he had no 'politics', and deprecated the extension of the franchise until working-men should have fitted themselves for it by education. He thought, however, that the State should look forward to a time when they should so have fitted themselves ; and, in this faith, he, with Ludlow and Charles Kingsley, started in 1848 the 'little penny broadsheet' called *Politics for the People*, to combat the irreligious, and often blasphemous, newspapers that were read by the thinking artisans. In 1849, with Thomas purple stockings, tunic, and gold chain . . . he told us of the great increase of his religion in this country . . . he seems very intimate with Dr. Pusey, and gave us to understand, not only that their opinions are very nearly the same, but that the great body of that persuasion, Pusey himself included, are very nearly ripe for reunion with Rome.' (Greville, v. 25.) Lord Beaumont and the Duke of Norfolk, Catholic peers, protested, in public letters in 1850, against the Papal Encyclical, as putting Catholics in a false position as regarded their allegiance to the Crown.

Hughes and Vansittart-Neale, he threw himself into the movement for co-operation in industry, and contributed in 1852 to the passing of a Bill by which Co-operative Societies could be incorporated¹ at small cost. Finally, in 1853, he founded the 'Working Men's College', in London, opened in October 1854.

Many of Maurice's evenings were spent in conversation with intelligent artisans of every shade of opinion, and he thereby acquired a knowledge, such as few of his brother clergy possessed, of the doubts and difficulties of this important class. Such intercourse, however, aroused the suspicion, not only of 'moderate' statesmen, but of many bishops and Church-newspapers. Maurice had avowed that he belonged, and would belong, to no ecclesiastical party. Although he held no parish cure, he had been chaplain of Guy's Hospital from 1836, and he became chaplain at Lincoln's Inn, and Theological Professor at King's College ten years later. This College was governed by a Council whose leading spirits were churchmen of the 'High-and-dry' school.² Dr. Jelf, its Principal, became much alarmed when Maurice began to question the doctrine of everlasting punishment—to 'undamn mankind', as Sir Francis Doyle put it. The cumulative effect of the Professor's dangerous sympathy with the working class, and of this new and detestable 'heresy', was a sharp attack on him and his friends in the *Quarterly Review* (September 1851). Jelf, knowing Maurice's humility, gave him a hint that a resignation would be a graceful act on his part, but the Professor, who had defended the Tractarians both against Lord Ashley and against the whole force of the High-and-dries, gently but firmly requested that his writings should first be examined by the Council. After much hesitation,

¹ Until the 'Derby-Dizzy' Government passed this, it was very costly for any Society to get a charter of incorporation to protect its funds against possible dishonesty of its own officers.

² Sir R. Inglis was the moving spirit; Gladstone was also on the Council, and there were many *ex officio* members, both clerical and lay; the Bishop of London, Dr. Blomfield, took the leading part in Maurice's dismissal.

the Council took the rash step of expelling him, in spite of a brave amendment by Gladstone (who certainly was not in theological sympathy with Maurice) in favour of delay. 'I knew', wrote the victim,¹ 'when I wrote the sentences about eternal death that I was writing my own sentence at King's College'—and he was a very poor man with a family of young children. So, no doubt, were many Tractarians who, with equal honesty, had seceded to Rome when their hour of trial came. The lawyers were more tolerant than the Churchmen, and, when Maurice offered to resign also his chaplaincy at Lincoln's Inn, the Benchers unanimously begged him to remain; and before long it began to dawn upon the world that, as in Goldsmith's poem, it was not so much the man who had been bitten, as the dog that had bitten him, who suffered.

Maurice's was the last instance of a successful persecution for 'heresy' within the Church of England, for the attack of the Bishop of Capetown on Colenso, Bishop of Natal,² 1861-6, and Pusey's belated, though very fierce, attack on Jowett³ in 1862, were both failures. Maurice was overwhelmed with congratulations from every one whose judgement really mattered, and, a few days after his dismissal, he received one of the loveliest of Tennyson's lyrics, calling him the 'man that is dear to God'. *Ecce Homo* appeared anonymously in 1865 and was welcomed by all thoughtful Christian laymen. It is of these years that Lord Morley says 'strong gusts [of theology] swept the high latitudes'.⁴

It is customary for Scotsmen to congratulate themselves on the fact that, while these fierce controversies were raging in England, 1830-60, their own Church was rent by no doctrinal strife, that it had only one real issue to face, and

¹ *Life*, ii. 168.

² The Judicial Committee of the Privy Council ruled that the Bishop of Capetown had no jurisdiction over the Bishop of Natal.

³ This was only the culminating point of a series of attacks on Jowett's liberal theology; they had begun in 1855, and the attack of 1862 was prolonged into an equally unsuccessful attack against the writers of *Essays and Reviews*.

⁴ *Gladstone*, ii. 168.

that a disciplinary one. Yet any student of Hanna's *Memoir of Dr. Chalmers*, or Dr. Buchanan's *History of the Ten Years' Conflict*, or Brown's *Annals of the Disruption*, can see that the movement leading to the schism of 1843 was in reality akin to the Puseyite movement in England. The difference lay mainly in the fact that Scotsmen know their country's history, and Englishmen don't. The Free-Churchmen started from an evangelical revival directly descended from the spirit of the old Covenanters.¹ This spirit had been kept alive through the 'Secession' of 1733, the several successive Secessions from that Secession (1747, 1799, 1806), and the foundation of the 'Relief Church' of 1761. Much in these Secessions² had been protest against the 'yoke of patronage', i.e. the Act of Anne which had restored to the lay patrons that right of presenting to churches which they had lost in 1690. Yet much also rested on reaction against

could harangues

On practice and on morals.³

Morality rather than dogma had been the theme of 'Moderate' sermons during the years in which Dr. Balwhidder swayed the parish of Dalmailing and King George III bore the sceptre of great Britain.⁴ Thomas Chalmers (1780-1847), the leader in 1843, was a convert from this Moderate Party, which then dominated the General Assembly and the Scottish Universities. He had begun his career as a 'pluralist', holding at once a parish in Fife and a Professorship at St. Andrews. He had gifts beyond those of any English party leader, for he had both a fiery eloquence, akin to Wesley's, and an unrivalled power of organization. As Minister of the Tron Church in Glasgow he worked immense

¹ Yes, and at Muirkirk, at the opening of the first Free Church, a blue silk banner, believed to have been carried at Drumclog, inscribed '*For God, King, and Covenant*', was produced by a zealous farmer, to whom it had descended from the Campbells of Auld-houseburn. (Brown, ed. 1893, p. 283.)

² Some of these Secessions came together again to found in 1847 the 'United Presbyterian' Church.

³ Burns, *The Holy Fair*.

⁴ *Annals of the Parish*, John Galt.

good among the poor, and he also brought the civil questions of the day into the pulpit, as few, except Maurice, did in England. He told his hearers (and they needed the lesson) home truths about commercial morality, about rents, wages, and the employment of private capital. Pure 'Bible Christianity' was the mainspring of his work, and he even brought this into his teaching of Moral Philosophy. He was a strong supporter of the Catholic claims and of the Protestant Dissenters in 1828-9, a strong opponent of the Reform Bill.

Outwardly, however, the one issue in the *Ten Years* was patronage, and patronage only. Each presentee to a parish was supposed to have a 'call' from his parishioners before he could exercise his functions as minister, and this call should be signed by a majority of the heritors. A few cases of deadlock had arisen during the eighteenth century and had usually gone in favour of the patron and the 'intruded' minister. Some, as we have just seen, had led to Secessions. In the early years of the nineteenth century petitions against such 'intrusion' had increased. In 1834 Chalmers had promoted in the General Assembly an 'Act of Calls', or 'Veto Act', to give the parishioners a veto on presentations. A large fund had also been raised to build new churches in populous districts. No patronage was to be exercised over these *quoad sacra* churches (of which nearly two hundred were above ground before the Disruption), and Parliament had sanctioned their exemption. But the General Assembly had no more power to pass a Veto Act, or any other Act, without parliamentary sanction, than an English Convocation, if it had been sitting, would have had. This legal position, however, had never been stated *totidem verbis* in Scotland, as it had in England; and one might almost say that the Church of Scotland had never since 1690 (and the Act of 1690 was more a treaty than a law) acknowledged its subordination to the State. Chalmers visited London in 1838, and delivered a series of eloquent lectures against the 'Erastian' view.¹ His audiences could admire, applaud,

¹ 'Lockhart said Chalmers was as great a Jesuit as ever walked

and occasionally even weep at, his words, but no English Law Courts or Parliaments, with the long history of the seventeenth century behind them, could accept his view. Even the Scottish Court of Session could not accept it. Hence arose, from 1834 onwards, a series of disputed presentations—it speaks volumes for the prudence of patrons that there were only ten in ten years—beginning with the ‘Auchterarder Case’, which lasted from 1834 till 1842. The House of Lords finally gave judgement in favour of the minister, Mr. Young, intruded on the parishioners by Lord Kinnoull the patron, and gave heavy damages for Young against the local Presbytery, which had refused to institute him. The case of the parish of Marnoch in Strathbogie became famous in January 1841, because the entire congregation walked out of church, in deep snow, while the Presbytery was ordaining Mr. Edwards inside it. The General Assembly thereon demanded the abolition of patronage, and voted that all Acts of Parliament against the ‘spiritual independence of the Scottish Church and Nation’ were null and void; Mause Headrigg herself could not have denounced the ‘black Erastianism’ with more fervour. This was flat rebellion, and the Civil Courts had to issue ‘interdicts’ on any minister preaching in a parish church without having been presented by the patron; the penalty for disobedience was imprisonment, and any heritor could apply for an interdict.

Gradually the majority of the Assembly veered round from this impossible position, into which Chalmers had been guiding them ever since 1832. It shrank from the prospect of an interminable series of quarrels with the Courts, and Chalmers obviously overstated his case in representing the Courts as the aggressors. He called a great meeting of his friends in November, and it was there voted that, if a last appeal to Parliament should be unsuccessful, there should be a Secession, and that a ‘Sustentation Fund’ should be raised

Spain, and that Cromwell was the only man who knew how to deal with Scottish Presbyterians.’ (Broughton, v. 274, 1840.) But Lockhart greatly admired his eloquence.

for the 'Free' Church of Scotland, which would necessarily be created thereby. It was an ambitious title, but the result fully justified it. Educated opinion was not with Chalmers; the Moderates had been, on the whole, a wise, good, and intellectual set of ministers. It was the peasantry, the farmers, and the lower-middle class, that were to be the flocks of the Secessionists, and the movement was strongest in the far north, the most backward part of Scotland.

The Appeal to Parliament having been rejected, by 211 to 76 votes,¹ in March 1843, the General Assembly met in May at Holyrood House. William III's portrait slipped from its wall as the ministers crowded in; it was caught and re-hung, but 'there goes the Revolution Settlement', said one of the bystanders.² In St. Andrew's Church, to which the Assembly adjourned for worship, the protest of the intending Seceders was handed in by Dr. Welsh, and out they walked, over four hundred in number, to another hall which had been prepared for the occasion. There Chalmers was elected Moderator of the new Church. His adherents, present or absent, numbered four hundred and seventy-four placed ministers; many others afterwards joined, and only a very few fell away. The Scottish Church was strong in the mission-field, and a large majority of the missionaries ultimately became 'frees'. In some parishes whole flocks deserted their ministers, if these refused to secede, and in such parishes grass began to grow at the church-doors.³ The Established Church treated the matter with reverence and gravity, and, to its eternal honour, refrained from all persecution of the Seceders; but, though several committees were appointed to draw up an answer to the protest of May 18th, no such answer was ever published.

Then came the partings from the manses, of which so many touching tales have been told, and then 'the rebuilding

¹ Twenty-five out of thirty-seven Scottish members present voted in the minority.

² Brown, 89.

³ One such church, Rosehall in Sutherland, fell down, on the first Sabbath after the Disruption, and 'killed its entire congregation'—of nobody!

of our Zion'. The sufferings of the Seceders were at first real; few of the Scottish clergy had private means (herein differing from the English clergy of those days), and most of the protestors went penniless into the world. There were also bigoted or curmudgeonly heritors who refused a rood of land on which to build the new churches, or even a barn for temporary worship, yet on the whole such refusals were rare. Building began at once, and great numbers of the early Free Churches were, at first, of wood.¹ Within thirteen years the Fund had reached £160,000 a year, and the stipends of the ministers were steadily raised above the £150 which Chalmers had at first thought the possible maximum. Colleges for training ministers, pension funds, widow-and-orphan funds, school-funds (both for building schools and for paying masters), had to be added; and all had to be raised by hard begging from a class of men and women who, as a rule, had little to give. If there was not another man in Europe but Chalmers who could have raised these funds, there was not another country in the world where they would have been subscribed. We were not left without 'singular mercies of the Lord' to refresh our zeal; for it pleased Him that wages should be low, and the building trade slack, in our first few years. For the great parish of Latheron, Caithness—320 square miles with five kirks—a parish well provided with building stone, but entirely destitute of wood, it 'providentially happened' that a large vessel laden with timber was cast away on that iron coast; Dr. Brown² does not tell us what became of the crew. The total sum contributed towards the Free Church in the first thirty years of its existence was over ten millions sterling. Chalmers set a noble example by taking charge of a district in the West-Port slum of Edinburgh, and before his death in 1847 it was growing into a model parish. Had he lived to see the Established Church attain, as it attained in 1874, the

¹ 'Weel, Sandy,' says an 'Established' farmer, 'and how are ye gettin' on wi' your wooden kirks?' 'Fine,' says Sandy, 'and how are ye gettin' on wi' your wooden ministers?'

² p. 273.

same freedom as his own, we can hardly doubt that his voice would have been given for the reunion which has not even yet been effected.¹ The Free Church has always been a little behind the Established in the matter of learning, and a little ahead of it in the matter of bigotry. The General Assembly of the latter did, indeed, protest when in 1865 a 'kist o' whistles' was introduced by the Minister of Greyfriars in Edinburgh, yet it took no action; but in 1881 there occurred in the Free Church a case parallel to those of Maurice and Colenso, when the learned Dr. Robertson Smith was expelled from his Chair of Theology in the New College of Edinburgh, for adopting modern critical views on the literal truths of the Bible.

If I have lingered unduly over the Church-history of both countries, I must plead that to our grandfathers it was deemed to be of high importance. *Inter alia* it profoundly affected the career of a man who was destined to play a leading part in politics. Mr. Gladstone has hitherto made but sporadic appearances in these pages, which will perhaps be thought too full of him before they are finished. His father, a rich Liverpool merchant, born a Scottish Presbyterian and Whig, joined the English Church, and passed from Canningite into High-and-dry Tory. The son entered Christ Church in 1828, when the Oxford Movement was just beginning. A visit to Rome in 1832 brought home to him 'the pain and shame of Schism'. He had then an earnest desire to take orders; but the offer of a seat in the House of Commons decided him against this. He entered on political life with great advantages. He had perfect health, and a great capacity for work; though short of stature he had fine physical strength, and some of his youthful walks, as described by Lord Morley, were real feats. He had a rich

¹ In 1900 a large majority of the Free Church congregations effected a reunion with the 'United Presbyterian' Church of 1847: a small minority of the same refused to agree and claimed the whole Sustentation Fund. There was much litigation until 1905, when a Parliamentary Commission was appointed to allot this property by fair distribution among the claimants. Union of the whole, whom mere tradition now divides, cannot be very far away.

voice, which, like Peel's, never wholly lost its northern breadth.¹ His eyes (in his old age at least) would flash suddenly, almost as if blazing; he had the 'look of a prophet'.² But his looks belied him, for he was not a prophet, if foresight is indispensable in the prophetic trade. He lacked Disraeli's capacity for reading the secrets of the future. His mind was full of water-tight or imagination-proof compartments, and many of these were empty, others, especially the theological ones, were full to repletion. This side of his mind choked his scholarship and vitiated his literary taste; he would take up the most priggish novel and talk it, and its author, into fame, if he discovered a 'moral purpose' in it.³ On the other hand he had a true love of great poetry, especially Homer, Dante, and Wordsworth;⁴ he could turn an Italian *canzone*, and Italy was to him, as to so many of his contemporaries, a second *patria*. To the teaching of France he was completely deaf; he probably thought of her as a danger-zone, fickle in politics, and infidel in religion. He was also quite ignorant of the march of Science. He could sway crowds with his tongue, but he knew little of the feelings and

¹ It was more a Lancashire accent than a Scottish; Mr. Gladstone's 'R' was always rather a 'WR'.

² Malmesbury (*Memoirs*, i. 155) met him at dinner in 1844; 'he is a man much spoken of as one who will come to the front. We were disappointed at his appearance, which is that of a Roman Catholic Ecclesiastic, but he is very agreeable.' Sir H. Taylor (*Autobiography*, i. 82) says that he once asked Charles Villiers 'how Gladstone was getting on', adding 'I hear he has become quite popular': 'Yes,' replied Villiers, 'every one speaks well of him, G—— d—— him!'

³ He thought *The Woman in White* a greater novel than *Adam Bede*. (Morley, ii. 42.) But perhaps the most strange of his literary judgements was that he found Reginald Wilberforce's *Life* of his father, Samuel, an 'edifying book'. (Ibid. ii. 597.) He was a considerable theatre-goer and enjoyed a good burlesque as well as more serious plays. It is even recorded in his Diary that he could pay homage to one of the greatest dancers of all time: 'Miss K. V. in the ballet, dressed in black and gold, danced marvellously.' (Ibid. ii. 476.)

⁴ If anything could have saved him it would have been his love for Wordsworth; one may affect almost anything in literary taste, but not that.

passions of the individuals composing those crowds. He had sat in his youth at the feet of one real statesman, Peel, and retained to the last some lessons from Peel's teaching, yet these lessons were apt to be lost in the tortuous convolutions of his own brain. His loyalty to Peel's memory contributed much to his hatred of Disraeli, but would not, of itself, have founded that hatred; that was rooted in his own self-conscious public virtue. He saw in his rival a man who was now below, now above, ordinary political morality, and who made little pretence of paying homage to it. Unfortunately that hatred impelled him to appeal for support to democratic passion, and to invest that passion with a 'conscience' that it never possessed, and is incapable of possessing.

It is part of that cruel irony of which the Fates are so fond, that this man began his political career in a fright about the 'spoliation' of the Irish Church. Gladstone held minor office in Peel's first brief Government in 1834-5, and would almost certainly have resigned on this point if Peel had not fallen in April '35. About 1837 he became a leading speaker in the House, always strongest on Church questions. He said that the Oxford Movement had no direct effect on him—but it is obvious that he was entirely mistaken. He very early became, and never ceased to be, a devout Puseyite, and by Puseyites he was swayed till the day of his death.¹ His book *On the State in its Relation to the Church* (1838) would not now be intelligible to a layman, and was not even then intelligible to Peel, nor to Macaulay, who flayed it in the *Edinburgh Review*. Lord Ashley² said of him, in 1843, 'he has asserted principles in matters ecclesiastical that he cannot reduce to practice at the present hour, and yet has taken office with a Ministry that neither can conform to them, nor even desires it. His public life has been a long effort to retain his principles and yet not lose his position.' He resigned on the Maynooth grant in '45, while he was feeling his way towards

¹ He could, however, at least from 1864, court the favour of Protestant Dissenters for political purposes, and he loved in his later years to appeal to 'the Nonconformist conscience'.

² *Life of Shaftesbury*, i. 445.

the policy of free imports. He then professed a wish that Peel would send him unofficially as an agent to the Vatican. Having escaped secession to Rome in Newman's year,¹ he became a close friend of Pusey, and was in opposition, both on political and religious questions, to Russell's and Derby's Governments till the fall of the latter in December 1852.

Of such a strange combination of irreconcilable qualities was the man made, who was now (1853) helping Aberdeen to drift into the Crimean War.

¹ When he visited Rome in October 1866 'he seemed to care little about the archaeology, but never wearied of hearing Italian sermons from priests and preaching friars'. (Morley, *Gladstone*, ii. 217.)

CHAPTER VII

THE CRIMEAN WAR

It is difficult for a compiler to approach the Russian War of 1854-5 uninfluenced by Kinglake's magnificent *torso*. It is one of the great classics of English historical literature. The author of the *Invasion of the Crimea* was no school-trained historian; he was already famous as a man of letters and as a traveller in North Africa, South-Eastern Europe, and the Levant.¹ He was present at the Alma and at the opening scenes of the campaign. He has strong prejudices and makes, perhaps, big mistakes, but he makes them in well-justified reliance on his own insight, with honest conviction, and with utter fearlessness. He moves through large spaces with a breadth of vision shared by very few writers. At heart he was probably an aristocratic Republican,

¹ *Eothen* was published in 1844, nine years after the journey it describes. Kinglake undertook his great work, at the request of Lady Raglan, in 1856, and the first two volumes were published in 1863, the last two not till 1887. The next best authority, among those who were actors on the stage, is *Letters from Head-Quarters* by Captain Somerset Calthorpe, afterwards 7th Lord Calthorpe (1st edn. 1856, 2nd 1857): the author was in all the great actions, on Lord Raglan's staff, and very close in his Chief's confidence. Sir Edward Hamley, a gallant young gunner in the Crimea, who afterwards developed into rather a 'difficult' theorist (author of the *Operations of War*), published in 1890 a monograph based on his own contemporary letters; it is now in its tenth edition; Hamley was a sharp critic of Kinglake. (Sir) W. H. Russell, correspondent of *The Times*, published, in 1855 and 1856, the substance of his newspaper work, but his better known and more condensed account, *The British Expedition to the Crimea*, was first published in 1858; there is a second edition of 1876, specially 'written up' to meet the renewed 'Eastern Question' of that year. Russell also was an eyewitness of most of the scenes, but it is a singularly disappointing book. No one would now trust the writer's statements, if controversial, without corroboration, for he was a brilliant Irishman and a journalist.

and he has much of the ancient Greek feeling about the State and the service due to it. He can estimate 'Public Opinion' at its true value, while as for Kings and Princes he 'minds them no more nor a porpus'. And he is such a master of every weapon in the armoury of language, of pathos, humour, scorn, indignation, hatred, love, and above all, clarity, that his readers feel as if they were, to use his own phrase, back 'in the grand, simple, violent world of which Englishmen read in their Bibles'. His combats glow with a Homeric fire, and his judgements, even when questionable, fall with a weight comparable to those of Thucydides.¹

There is a hero on Kinglake's stage, Lord Raglan, and there is a villain, Louis-Napoleon. Black is black and white is white, and there is too little allowance for the commonly-intervening shades of grey. And so the writer has thrown over the story of a war, heroically fought, yet unnecessary, unplanned, ill-supported, ill-waged, a halo of undying romance.

In truth, neither hero nor villain lived up to Kinglake's estimate of them. Mainly for personal ends Napoleon III kept Europe aquake and France restless for two decades, until he fell trapped in the snare of a villain built of sterner stuff than himself. He was simply an adventurer who had seized the throne and had muzzled all that was best in France. He looked round for some respectable ally, and our long-standing fear of the Russian Empire gave him the alliance of the virtuous and innocent Queen of England, and that of her virtuous and innocent Prime Minister.² That fear, to

¹ A great military historian, who is happily still with us, Mr. Fortescue, gives his readers the impression of the same fearlessness and breadth of view as Kinglake.

² 'After Augustus, Augustulus,' said Victor Hugo. It is not from British prejudice that I here subscribe to Kinglake's hostility to Napoleon III; in some ways he was a good friend to Britain, and he probably always wished to be one. In some ways, though not in many, it might also be possible to call him a 'good European' (the phrase was Talleyrand's); he worked widely for the idea of nationality. It is because I am a devout lover of France that I throw him to the wolves. Mr. Guedalla's *Second Empire*, which

which I have referred above, was not unnatural. It was Russia that had dealt the most obviously successful blows at the mighty Napoleon I. She was now creeping about all over the north and the west-centre of Asia, and we thought that she might soon be heard knocking at the gates of the Punjab. So we took her at her own valuation and failed to realize (perhaps till 1915, certainly till 1904-5) that it was an extravagantly high one. Yet she was but 'a Colossus stuffed with clouts'. The Tsar Nicholas loomed very large and was thought of as the typical, if rather brutal, 'King-Honest-man',¹ a name afterwards applied to Victor Emmanuel. His attempts at dominating Turkey had made great progress since 1828; they were perfectly well understood, and very openly expressed, and they led to a good deal of sympathy for the under-dog, sympathy which made people forget what an unpleasant dog the Turk was, and in what a nasty condition was his kennel. Even strong Radicals were led (misled, says Lord Morley),² by the recent stories of Poland and Hungary, into believing that a war against Russia might be a war for freedom; nor, perhaps, were they wholly wrong.

Moreover, all that was best among us clung to the friendship of France. We were the two civilized Powers; have there ever been any others? Who was France's actual ruler seemed to matter little; if she chose this adventurer (and her ridiculous *plébiscites* seemed to say that she did) that was her business: Louis-Philippe had been an unquiet neighbour: the Second Republic was an explosive unknown-quantity, and, now that 'Order reigned in Paris' once more, we failed to realize that it was rather on the same conditions on which Tsars were accustomed to make it reign in Warsaw.

I have read since this was written, has not led me to change my opinion. For Mr. F. A. Simpson's *Louis Napoleon and the Recovery of France*, see note at the end of this chapter.

¹ He wasn't honest, and could play fox as well as bear. He was 6 feet 2 inches, an unusual size for a monarch. 'He gives me more the idea of a Thracian peasant raised to Empire than the descendant of a line of kings.' (Greville, v. 245, 1844.) Who knows who Nicholas's grandfather may have been?

² *Cobden*, p. 619.

But the Power most nearly concerned in any dispute in South-Eastern Europe was Austria, and it was unfortunate that our Italian sympathies, laudable for every other reason, alienated us at this time from Austria; Prussia, nonentity as she then was, would ultimately follow the old German tradition and crave guidance from Vienna.¹ It was within our option to set in motion, and keep active, a concert of the Four Powers against Nicholas, and in that concert young Francis Joseph, in spite of his boyish gratitude to the Tsar for his help during the recent rebellion of Hungary, was ready to take the lead. There could have been no Crimean War if the Four had held together. Our diplomacy seems to have been as short-sighted as our strategy was to be feeble.

Quarrels between Greek and Latin monks who had convents in Jerusalem and Bethlehem, were of long standing, but the Greeks had been steadily getting the upper hand, proportionately to the growth of their protectress, Russia. Nor did the Catholic nations of the West cry out seriously against the more or less exclusive privileges (of entering certain churches at particular hours, possessing a particular key, putting a star over a particular altar) claimed by the Greeks. Pilgrimages, still a sacred duty for Russians, had fallen out of fashion in the West. Yet it was easy for Napoleon III, who, when in exile, had actually fought for the Liberals and had ever afterwards laboured under the suspicion of being an anti-papal revolutionary, to tickle the ears of French Catholics by asserting on their behalf a claim for them to be, in the Holy Cities, on a footing of equality with the Greeks. He had begun to play this game before his *Coup d'État* of December 1851, and after it he brought still further pressure to bear at Constantinople, provoking thereby, whenever the hapless Turk showed symptoms of yielding to him, energetic protests, and, at last, overt action, from the Tsar.

¹ She was horribly afraid of Nicholas too: 'No one who was not in Germany at the commencement of the Crimean War can quite realize what the *Spectre Russe* then was.' (Grant-Duff, *Diary*, p. 14.)

The Tsar, who hated the very name of Bonaparte, and knew that he would have his whole people behind him in any religious quarrel with Turkey, was at first, perhaps, comparatively honest in his protests. But when, early in 1853, he began to move soldiers towards the Moldavian frontier, it was because he perceived that, out of a fuss about a key and a star, Russia might win something very substantial, if not the imperial city on the Bosphorus, whose ancient Roman eagle had so improperly got itself displayed upon the Russian flag. In this temper of mind he began, in January and February of that year, to sound the British ambassador at his Court on 'what was to be done with Turkey'. The 'parable that has become historic'¹ was in fact used by Nicholas:—'a sick man, a very sick man, whose dissolution is imminent';² in short the Tsar proposed partition. He was kind enough to allot Egypt and Crete to us, a protectorate over all the Christian provinces of Turkey (these, in fact, to become small nationalities) to himself; and he added, as an afterthought, that he 'might have to occupy Constantinople, but had no intention of keeping it'. He got little encouragement from Sir Hamilton Seymour, who naturally reported at once to London.³

All this was entirely against the advice of Nicholas's wiser statesmen, who told him truly that a floating derelict Turkish Empire would always be at his mercy, while no one could say what the result of partition and new nationalities might be. Nor was it very good diplomacy, for a stronger

¹ Hamley, 5. To a later date (September 17, 1853) belongs the first of the great *Punch* cartoons on the war, 'A Consultation about the State of Turkey'—a French and an English doctor conferring, while Death, as a Russian soldier, is hovering over the sick man's bed.

² Greville (vii. 316) records a story that Nicholas had once used a similar metaphor in conversation with Metternich, who replied, 'Does your Majesty speak as the sick man's physician or as his prospective heir?'

³ No doubt a bargain with Nicholas for the obliteration of the Turk would have saved the world seventy years of horrors; but it would have been a shameful bargain against the public law of Europe.

minister than Aberdeen would at once have made such treacherous suggestions known and would have assured the solidarity of the Four Powers against them. Moreover it was not true that Turkey was then sick to death; rather she was at this time submitting herself, under a well-meaning, if drunken, young Sultan, to a series of reforms, dictated by the British ambassador Sir Stratford Canning,¹ and specially designed to cut the ground from under Nicholas's feet. Reaction, no doubt, was never far away, and reforms were generally suspended when Sir Stratford's back was turned; we need not take Palmerston seriously when he said that 'during the past twenty years Turkey had made more progress than any State in Europe'.

Sir Stratford was absent, on another mission, when the dispute began. He returned in April 1853, as Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, to find the Divan crouching in terror under the threats of Nicholas's chief bully Prince Menshikoff. He at once saw that the 'key and star' were mere pretexts, and even got some support from the French ambassador when he induced the Turks to refuse nearly all the French, to grant nearly all the Russian, demands on these points. Thereupon the bully showed his master's hand by going on to demand (May 5) for the Tsar an exclusive protectorate over all the Christian subjects of Turkey, with an actual threat of war if this should be refused. It was courteously refused. Menshikoff went away in a rage, and shook his gauntlet at the Seven Towers. Before his departure he

¹ Torture had been abolished, Christian evidence admitted at law, Christians protected in person, property, and worship; Syria had been pacified, peace concluded with Persia, Hungarian refugees had been protected. The great ambassador has been treated by all historians except Kinglake as an anti-Christian war-maker, whereas he was in reality a very devout Christian indeed. He liked the humbler classes of Turks, but he utterly despised the governing Pashas, and saw through the dishonesty of the whole Divan just as he did through that of the Tsar. A later British ambassador, being a devout Catholic, used always to cross himself before going into the Sultan's presence, saying with grim humour, 'there's Evil Spirits about'.

learned that the ambassadors of the Four Powers had applauded the Turkish refusal which Lord Stratford had dictated.

Now Lord Clarendon, who has justly earned a reputation for wisdom, had succeeded Russell as Foreign Secretary in February 1853, yet it is astonishing to see how little effort he made to maintain equality of pressure upon Nicholas from Vienna, Berlin, Paris, and London, astonishing also that he failed to stiffen Aberdeen against the blandishments of Napoleon, who kept on urging London and Paris to act alone, act at once, and act together. He even failed for nearly a year to get Nicholas's suggestion of partition published. He did indeed tell the Russian ambassador in London that an occupation of Moldavia would mean war, but the wretched Prime Minister immediately apologized for this 'indiscretion' of his Foreign Secretary. War, indeed, after forty years of peace, was as inconceivable to Aberdeen as was that due preparation for war which is generally the best means of averting it.¹ Nor did the Premier make any attempt to take Parliament into the confidence of his Cabinet. Clarendon was quite right when he said we 'drifted' into war. Nicholas, an old friend of Aberdeen, built securely on this temper, built also on the belief that England was 'sunk in trade and money-bags',² that her new friendship with France (under a Bonaparte, too!) was a 'bluff', and that even the arrival of French and British warships at the mouth of the Dardanelles (June) was the same. So he proceeded to march his men,

¹ 'The Pipe of Peace' (*Punch*, Dec. 17, 1853): Aberdeen, as a foolish-looking lackey, is smoking a large pipe on a barrel of gunpowder. There are many other excellent *Punch* drawings late in 1853, mostly by Leech, e. g. 'A caution to Imperial birds of prey' (Nov. 5): 'A Bear with a sore head' (Nov. 26): 'Did it want a bit of Turkey, then?' (Nurse Aberdeen with a screaming baby-bear on her lap) (Dec. 10). But then, and thereafter, even during the war, *Mr. Punch* felt it difficult to give up his old dislike and distrust of Napoleon III. The same paper, with much less reason, refused to abandon its old enmity to Austria.

² On Feb. 10, 1854 a deputation of Quakers went to Petrograd to present an address against war. Nicholas received them very kindly.

through Moldavia into Wallachia, and so towards the Danube (July 2).

The Turks wisely refrained from taking even this as an act of war, but, wiser than Aberdeen, they began to mobilize their troops. Austria, and for a moment Prussia also, added their protests to ours against the Russian advance. The last effort for peace was of Austrian origin, the so-called 'Vienna Note'. It was signed by the Four Powers, but, when it reached Constantinople, the Turks rightly considered that it was only another wording of the Tsar's demand for the exclusive protectorate; they could hardly with any 'face' accept this, and they altered it in such fashion that Nicholas was bound to reject it. So, says 'A Terrible Turk', in *Punch* (October 15th, 1853), on the banks of the Danube, to John Bull and Monsieur Louis, 'I *will* fight, he hit me first'. The Sultan declared war on the Tsar on October 23rd.

It was not much of a blow that the Tsar could as yet hit his adversary by land. Before the end of the month Omar Pasha had crossed the Danube far up at Widdin, and was marching bravely on the Russian right flank, which in December he mauled badly. Not till May 1854 were the Russians able to cross and begin the siege of Silistria¹ on the direct road to their goal. On land at least it looks as if the Turks could have defended themselves successfully. But not at sea; the whole Black Sea, and so the Bosphorus, was at the mercy of the Russian fleet in Sebastopol. The *casus belli* for the Western Powers seemed to come, when, on November 30, this fleet sailed out and simply annihilated the so-called fleet of Turkey off the coast of Asia Minor. This was the 'Massacre of Sinope': in reality it was no more a massacre than any other ruthlessly-pressed victory of a reasonably manned and found force over an incredibly bad one. The shame was held to lie with the Allied fleets, which, though already at hand, had received no instructions to succour their almost-ally, Turkey. The 'People' of Great Britain roared with rage and pity, and cried out for instant

¹ Silistria was valiantly defended by three young English officers on leave from India, Nasmyth, Butler, and Ballard.

war. Aberdeen was no longer able to 'hold the British Lion'. His Colonial Secretary, the fifth Duke of Newcastle, was, in virtue of that post, responsible for the War Office.¹ He was a well-meaning, energetic man, and really, in the chaos that, as usual, followed our declaration of war, he seems to have done his best. But by the end of 1854 the whole thing had got beyond his grasp. Palmerston, shrewdly gauging the popular cry, resigned the Home Office on December 15, '53, ostensibly on other grounds, really as a protest against Aberdeen's hesitations, and returned to it on Christmas Day because he saw that war was inevitable. He accepted war lightly because he was the one statesman who had no dread of Russia; but it is only fair to say, with his biographer,² that, if he had been at the Foreign Office, he would long ago have spoken with such firmness that Russia would have drawn in her horns.

Palmerston, though perhaps already suspecting that in 1851 he had 'backed the wrong horse', made no bones about accepting Napoleon's alliance now. But the utmost that Aberdeen would do at the end of the year was to send our fleet into the Black Sea with orders to 'request' all Russian ships of war to return to port. Such a request would have galled a gentler temper than the Tsar's. But it was 'not war'; 'oh no, anything but war'. Kinglake rightly shows that, by refusing to resign, Aberdeen and Gladstone actually muzzled, both in and out of Parliament, the very considerable minority of Englishmen who would fain have kept peace, though not those who, with Bright and Cobden, objected to all wars on principle. Gladstone no doubt was thinking chiefly of the wreckage of his budgets and of his other projected reforms. He was reasonably patriotic as long as he remained in office; he did see that Nicholas, as a violator of public law, must be checked, and it was not till he had gone out that he spoke, in the spring of 1855 (during the Vienna Conference), against pressing Russia to resign her prepon-

¹ In June 1854 the two tasks were separated, and Newcastle kept the War Department.

² Ashley, ii. 33.

derance in the Black Sea, and protested that no 'indignity' should be proposed to her. Long afterwards he had the hardihood to tell his biographer that 'no divided opinions in the Cabinet had led to hesitating action or brought on the war'.¹ His rival Disraeli, though in his private letters he railed at Palmerston in the most indecent terms, took in public the same view as Palmerston, that it was all Aberdeen's fault for 'kowtowing' to Nicholas. Being in opposition he protested against every step of the drifting Government, yet, had he been called to office any time after the end of 1853, he could only have followed, not diverted, the popular clamour.² There is no doubt that he repeatedly approached Gladstone and Bright, and urged them, both personally and through the newspaper which he managed (*The Press*), to combine with him in a cry for peace, and there is no doubt that both these men were willing to be approached. Yet one cannot get away from the feeling that, while with them there was a genuine, if mistaken, desire to put an end to the war, there was with Disraeli mainly a desire to embarrass the Government.

While that Government thus blindly ignored the facts that it was far more Austria's job than ours or France's to get Nicholas out of the Danubian provinces, and that Austria was actually moving troops to her frontier for this purpose, our separate alliance with France was proclaimed as a *fait accompli* in January. War was declared on the Tsar by both countries at the end of March, and our final French Treaty

¹ Morley's *Gladstone*, i. 485; this was in 1881. He did not mention the rather unlikely story, told by Kinglake (ii. 94), of the whole Cabinet going to sleep while Newcastle read to his colleagues the fatal dispatch which sent our army to the Crimea.

² He was not more ignorant of strategy, though he was more ignorant of history, than most civilian statesmen of his time when he compared the Crimean expedition with that to Walcheren. He might well have compared much in the execution of the two plans, but the conception of the attack on Antwerp in 1809 was admirable. The best thing 'Dizzy' did during this war was to protest against the Foreign Enlistment Bill, which was to give us ten thousand rascalion mercenaries.

was signed on April 10th. It was not unnatural if the Austrians shrugged contented shoulders on receipt of such news, for they saw that we should do their work; and perhaps that was what Palmerston meant when he afterwards said that we had been 'used as a cat's-paw by Austria'. Singular pair of cats that waved the monkey aside and insisted on being allowed to burn their own paws!

Now, though, no doubt, after Sinope, it would have been difficult for the Allies to refrain from teaching Nicholas to 'behave' for the future, the war was nominally one for the defence of Turkey, and as Nicholas could only get at the Sultan *via* the Danube or the Caucasus or by sea, and as a cordon of Allied ships at the eastern end of the Bosphorus would have afforded ample protection by sea, the Danube was really the line to be defended. If, then, Nicholas should retire beaten from the Danubian Provinces, the objects of the war would be, if not already attained, yet attainable without a shot being fired. And this was exactly what happened. General Paskiewitch was obliged to raise the siege of Silistria on June 22, 1854: the Turks crossed, after him, near Rustchuk and beat the Russians again at Giurgevo early in July. The two Provinces were actually clear of Russians by August 2nd. By agreement with Turkey, Austrian troops marched in and held them until the Peace. A cordon of Allied ships could have done the rest.

But France and England had 'declared war', England, indeed, much more eagerly than France, for the latter, having no India to defend, had no need to stand in fear of the Russian colossus. Were we then to come back without killing any one? No, let us have done with this Russian ogre once for all. So said Palmerston,¹ so said *The Times*,²

¹ More powerful perhaps behind the screen of the Home Office than if he had had Clarendon's responsibility. His letters during the war, both before and after he became Prime Minister, hardly tend to raise his reputation as a Statesman, certainly not as a great War-conductor. They are full of shrewd observations on details, but lack both foresight and breadth of view.

² *The Times'* leading articles on the Eastern Question are believed to have been generally written by Henry Reeve (sub-

and the British Merchant, and the Man in the Street, all in full-throated chorus. How can we get at our enemy? By sea of course. 'Hadn't the Russkies ever heard of a man called Nelson?' We would force the gates of the Neva at Cronstadt, destroy the menace to the Levant at Sebastopol.¹ Now the British Navy was in the throes of transition from sails to steam² (that from wood to iron had barely begun), and neither construction nor gunnery were keeping pace with the change. Meanwhile the science of fortification had made great strides, and Nicholas had been careful to arm such of his fortresses as were exposed to attack from the sea with a great weight of metal, protected, tier above tier, by thick granite casemates. A ship bombarding Cronstadt or Sebastopol could do little damage, unless a lucky shot happened to hit the tiny bull's-eye of the casemate's mouth, and long before she could do that she would be suffering very severe punishment herself. Moreover in 1815 Russia had, by the acquisition of Finland, added Sveaborg and Helsingfors to her older Baltic defences at Cronstadt and Reval.

The purely 'Parliamentary' ministers of the post-Reform Bill era had treated the Admiralty merely as a Cabinet office, and it was now held by Sir James Graham and administered by him, much as he would have administered

sequently the Editor of Greville's *Journals*) until October 1855, when Reeve quarrelled with his employers. Some may also have been written by Robert Lowe, afterwards Lord Sherbrooke. Cobden thought we had been pushed into war by *The Times*, and his biographer (p. 900) compares that paper to the Athenian sophists who 'taught the conventional prejudices of those who paid them'.

¹ Graham mentioned Sebastopol, as a possible object of naval attack, as early as Jan. 5, 1854, though he admitted we should probably lose ships in the process. (Greville, vii. 124.)

² Calthorpe (i. 104) mentions a 'record' voyage of a steam-transport-ship from Plymouth to Varna in 13½ days. Old Lord Dundonald had for many years been urging the Admiralty to introduce steam, but it was not till 1847 that the *Janus* was constructed from his designs. On Aug. 8, 1853, the Queen reviewed at Spithead twenty-five ships of war, of which thirteen were screw-steamers, nine paddle-steamers and three sail-of-the-line; there were 9,000 hands and 1,087 guns.

the Post-Office or any other department. He was typical of the 'old-gang' politicians so vigorously denounced by Disraeli, and probably not much more incompetent than most Civilian First-Lords. He chose to send Sir Charles Napier to the Baltic and Sir James Dundas (merely because he happened to hold the Mediterranean Command at the moment) to the Levant. These Admirals were almost contemporaries, each being within sight of that 70th birthday,¹ nearness to which was then held to be almost a test of fitness for the highest Naval or Military Commands. Both were Scots, and both were survivors of the 'great days'. But in other respects they were in contrast to each other. Napier had been continually in search, or in experience, of hard knocks. He had taken Acre by naval guns, and he argued that he could as easily take Cronstadt. He had run away into the Portuguese service, and had come back again. He had told his own story about that and many other things. He was too fond of telling his own story, and there were few tasks to which he did not think (and publicly boast) himself to be equal. Dundas's services, even during the Great War, had not been remarkable, and, since the Peace, he had spent far more years at Whitehall than afloat. If there was some excuse for selecting Napier, who was believed to have a touch of Cochrane in him, there was none for the choice of Dundas.

Yet Napier, never subjected to the same strain as his brother Admiral, failed even more completely than he. The nearer he got to Cronstadt the less he liked the look of those stone revetments, behind which the Russian ships lay in perfect safety. He bombarded Sveaborg without result; he threw ashore on Åland some few thousand French troops, who there took and destroyed the fortress of Bomarsund (August 16th). And he completely blockaded the Russian ports. That of itself would have been enough, and would in time have brought the Tsar to sue for peace, just as something similar had brought his brother to sue after Copen-

¹ Dundas was 69, Napier 68; each had entered the Service in 1799.

hagen. For nearly all Russia's sea-borne trade then passed through her Baltic ports, the Black Sea being a thousand miles from 'civilized' Russia.¹ That there should be at home a great outcry against Napier, whose vile temper and recriminations against the Admiralty made it worse, was natural but unjust; he had been sent on an errand impossible of fulfilment.

It was to the Levant, however, that nearly all British and French eyes were turned when war was declared. The *rendezvous* of the Allied troops was in that peninsula which was destined sixty-one years later, also owing to the mistakes of politicians at home, to be drenched with the blood of the same Allies, and it was in Gallipoli that the cholera now began to take toll of the Black Sea Expedition² of 1854. Thither came in May 25,000 British troops under Lord Raglan, and about twice that number of French under Marshal Saint-Arnaud. The Turks could have put up a force nearly double that of the Allied armies. Our men were brought on hired transports, often large East-Indiamen, or packets or liners belonging to steamship companies; the French were more often aboard ships of their own Navy and were always badly crowded. Saint-Arnaud was a hard-fighting adventurer who had won his spurs in Algeria; both he and his successor

¹ Russian Black Sea trade passed through Odessa (whose slight fortifications were easily destroyed by bombardment, the town being spared), or Taganrog on the Sea of Azof, which was only tackled in May 1855. Greville (vii. 154-6, 195-6) thought at first that the Government did well 'to relax belligerent rights and give all possible latitude to trade, with no more restrictions than were necessary for carrying on the war', but he goes on to say that, as they framed no regulations for these restrictions, 'the whole thing resulted in unparalleled confusion. . . .' Russian exports came freely to us through Prussian ports, and, when it was proposed in Council to forbid all trade with Russia during the war, and to require 'certificates of origin' for tallow, hemp, &c., the proposal was lost. The Privy Council even issued licences to export naval and military stores to neutral ports. In short, all trade with Russia was left open except at those ports which were actually blockaded! *Non tali auxilio* had Castlereagh defeated the great Napoleon.

² This was the name popularly given to it until the end of June.

Canrobert had been Napoleon's accomplices in December 1851. The Marshal was often prostrated by ill health, with pain so acute as to deprive his advice of value, and he died a few days after the battle on the Alma. His successor, personally as brave as any man, was always unnerved at the prospect, still more at the sight, of heavy losses on the field. Both were far too much controlled by the inconstant Master-Adventurer at the Tuileries, who frequently strained the Alliance by secret and self-contradictory instructions to them. Lord Raglan's greatest merits were the patience and courtesy which he displayed towards these Allies, who, with a force nearly double his own, too often left him all the kicks to receive, and kept such ha'pence as there were for themselves. In truth their Commands were not the Army of France which we had known as foe till 1815 and which we were to know as friend in 1914-18; they were the Army of Napoleon III.

Raglan was nearly as old as the British Admirals, sixty-six. As Lord Fitzroy Somerset he had been the gay boy of Larpent's Peninsular stories, and the hard-working Military Secretary to Wellington in 1812-13. He had lost his right arm at Waterloo,¹ but wrote beautifully with his left hand, and had administered the Army at home, still as Military Secretary, during the whole of Lord Hill's and of the Duke's commands, 1827-52. This had meant desk-work, and he had never commanded an army in the field. Nevertheless he was active and vigorous, and much younger than his years. In bravery, gentleness, and self-control he was like some Paladin of romance, the very fine flower of the British aristocracy. It was another one-handed Peninsular hero who had selected him, one who had, besides, a splendid record of Indian service to his name, Lord Hardinge. Hardinge had been Master-General of the Ordnance in 1848 (he found in store only fifty guns, and those were of the date of Waterloo); he had become Commander-in-Chief in 1852. But, like his old Chief the Duke in his later years, Hardinge had not quite

¹ 'Here, don't take that arm away till I have taken my wife's ring off the finger.'

realized that Military Science stands still only in China.¹ Nothing was then ready for an 'Expeditionary Force'. Far too few men of Indian experience were employed; the greatest of these was Colin Campbell, and he, after the first week of the fighting, was in a (most important) defensive post until he took over the 1st Division after Inkerman when the Duke of Cambridge was invalidated home.

The youngest man but one in high place was Airey, the Q.M.G.,² whose services dated only from 1821; Estcourt, the A.G., was a year older, fifty-two. Of the Cavalry Division, the Commander, Lord Lucan, aged fifty-four, had passed a few weeks as the guest of a Russian General in the campaign of 1828; his two Brigadiers, both older, Scarlett and Cardigan, had never seen a shot fired. The private reputation of the latter was notoriously bad. An Infantry Division had then two brigades, each of two regiments, five thousand men in all. Of the Divisional Commanders Cathcart was sixty, England sixty-one, Brown sixty-four, Evans sixty-seven. The Duke of Cambridge alone (but then, you see, he was the Queen's cousin) was a young man of thirty-five, and to him was given the finest Division of all, Guards and Highland Brigade. Sir John Burgoyne, the Chief Engineer, whose services would probably be more needed than any one else's, was seventy-two. Except Sir Colin not one of these men lasted out the siege of Sebastopol. Even the Commissary-General, Filder,³ who was responsible for commissariat and land-transport, might have swept the Levant more diligently for mules if he had been less than sixty-four; he was almost the only person superseded by orders from home, and even that was not till after

¹ Hardinge, however, had done much to arm the infantry with the *Enfield* rifle, an improvement on the *Minié*. He had also formed the camp of exercise at Chobham, which was afterwards expanded into Aldershot, and the School of Musketry at Hythe.

² He took over this office at Varna when Lord de Ros went home sick.

³ Palmerston once calls Filder 'that most respectable incapacity, whom you are determined to keep on in a situation for which he is totally unfit'. (*Panmure Papers*, i. 232, June 10, 1855.)

Raglan's death. Cathcart's position was unenviable, for he held, without Raglan's knowledge, a 'dormant commission' to succeed Raglan in the event of the latter's death or illness; and he occasionally treated this as an excuse for disobedience to orders.

Few even of the Brigadiers were left at the end of this Campaign. Pennefather, full of strange oaths,¹ the hero of Inkerman, was perhaps the stoutest of them, and even he broke down twice, and the second time was too ill to return. It was the regimental officers and their men who, though they could not control the strategy, and not often the tactics,² were going to show the world the stuff of which British soldiers were made, in spite of the mistakes of British Generals.

The greatest mistake, and it was an appalling one, that Raglan made was his contempt for his Turkish Allies. He did not live to hear of Williams's glorious defence of Kars on the Caucasian front, but that of Silistria, largely conducted by a trio of young British officers, should have opened his eyes. We know now what the Turk, especially behind any sort of defences, and when led by brave European officers, can do. Omar Pasha may not have been a great, yet he was certainly at the moment a victorious, soldier, and, though he spoke atrocious French, he knew his Russians thoroughly. Though often present at Allied Councils, and invariably treated with courtesy by Raglan (and indeed by the French Generals until Pélissier's time), he too often found his advice politely ignored. For to Raglan the Turks were simply 'irregulars', 'barbarians';³ his Divisional subordinate, the Duke of Cambridge, afterwards thought much the same of the British Volunteers in 1859-60. Raglan was, no doubt, horrified by the disorder and the filth he

¹ 'I tell you we gave 'em a h—ll of a towelling' (which was just what they did).

² At Inkerman, and in some other combats, second-lieutenants and even sergeants controlled tactics.

³ It is one of the few subjects on which the shrewd Calthorpe was also entirely misled; Kinglake understood the value of the Turks far better.

found at Gallipoli and Varna, by the 'hopelessness' of all Turkish administration; by the legions of fleas and bugs, and the 'rats as big as cats' romping up and down the barracks, in which his men had to be quartered. So when we did use the poor Turks we gave them no leadership in battle, or employed them as mere Gibeonites; and then of course they died in thousands, for their own Government was not going to spend its hoards in feeding its soldiers. Also it must be admitted that the Porte made no effort to succour its army in Armenia, which was holding up, with wholly inadequate supplies, a vastly superior Russian force under Mouravieff.

Neither the British nor the French Government could claim much superiority over its ally in the provision of stores, forage, land-transport,¹ or hospitals, and in fact Raglan was ready to move up to Varna (on the way to relieve the Danube front) before Saint-Arnaud. He landed there, 140 miles by sea from Constantinople, on June 24th; some French troops marched the whole 250 miles from Gallipoli. When both armies got there cholera swept their ranks; neither it nor dysentery was ever afterwards absent from either camp. And yet, just as we had settled at Varna, the Russians were quitting the Danubian Provinces, and peace might have been made. But the word *Sebastopol* had been mentioned in England early in June, and Newcastle's letter, dated 28th June, pressed for an attack on that fortress so strongly that Raglan held that no discretion was left to him. Sebastopol had been fortified, expressly as a menace to Turkey, early in Nicholas's reign, and both its natural, and (to seaward) its artificial, strength were great. Neither Dundas nor his French colleague, Admiral Hamelin, liked the idea of attacking it, and Omar was strongly against it. Saint-Arnaud agreed to the attack mainly because of

¹ The number of pack-mules required for an army of 70,000 men is enormous, and mules live on hay, which is not a common product of the Levant. 'A string of loaded mules eight miles long' was one of the things that astonished the civilian Larpent (*Journal*, p. 214) in 1813.

his wish to escape from fever-and-cholera-stricken Varna. Sir Edmund Lyons, Dundas's second, was loudest in favour of the plan, and it was he and Raglan who in H.M.S. *Fury* reconnoitred the coast for a landing: *Fury* looked into the harbour and got one shot between wind and water. All admitted that we might have to land, as Abercromby had landed in 1801, on an open beach under hostile guns, and certainly no one had any right to reckon on the blunder made by Menshikoff in allowing us to land unfought. Although we knew vaguely that he had a field army somewhere near, we had no idea of its strength or of its weakness. Let us land then: 'anyhow we shall beat the Russkies somewhere outside Sebastopol, so that will be all right.'¹ Maps we had none to speak of, intelligence,² in the military sense, less, except a vague idea that the Tartar peasants would be friendly. So we would land about thirty miles north of the fortress and march southwards along the coast till we got there. The fleet, like that of Edward I in his Welsh and Scottish wars, should sail alongside of us and be our base. We should only have four (or was it five?) rivers to cross; there were sure to be bridges, and, if not bridges, fords. If the Russian army closed in behind us? Then we would fight a fore-and-aft action. It was just a Joyous Adventure.

The landing in five days (September 14-18) of 62,000 Allied infantry, 1,000 (British) cavalry, 128 guns,³ on a narrow beach backed by cliffs of some height, was a fine feat, and

¹ 'Wish they would have the Russians over here, because then we could have thrashed 'em in Hyde Park and dined at Greenwich afterwards, you know.' (*Punch*, March 11, 1854.)

² Raglan must, as a young man, have known a good deal about John Grant and the Duke's other spies in Spain, but he gives one here the impression of being too high-minded to have much to do with such people. The Head of his Intelligence Department, Mr. Cattley (alias Calvert), did in time get a lot of really excellent work out of Tartar 'chiefs'; he died just after Raglan.

³ Mr. Roberts, master-mariner, devised the platforms, lashed between two boats, on which the guns were landed; he received no recognition for this invention.



the sailors surpassed themselves in cleverness and keenness. The Crimean Peninsula is hilly, almost mountainous, full of deep ravines with short rivers flowing either way; it is thinly inhabited by a pastoral people; there is much coarse grass, more low scrub, a few thick woods; while on the banks of the streams, and on some of the southward slopes, there is luxuriant cultivation of corn, vine and fruit-trees. In the open and in the summer it is easy marching-ground; there was a sort of coast-road from Sebastopol northwards to Eupatoria, another eastwards to Yalta, but only one 'Great Road' to Bakchi-Serai, Simpheropol, Perekop, and so to Central Russia. If the enemy, after so supinely allowing us to land, were to put up a fight, it would be at one of the five river-crossings, and Menshikoff had, as it happened, chosen an excellent position, which he omitted to fortify, on the southern bank of the River Alma. He had a few heavy guns from Sebastopol but was outnumbered by one-third in men and one-sixth in artillery; in cavalry he was greatly superior. As we alone as yet had cavalry, the French took the right (next the sea), both in the advance and in the battle of September 20.

On that day they were but slightly opposed, for the enemy had not enough troops to confront the whole Allied line, and he made his own front less by fighting in heavy columns. Saint-Arnaud ought to have turned his left with ease, but he made hardly any effort to do so. And we, faced by about our own numbers, had a desperate job to cross the river and fight our way up the southern bank. Co-ordination of divisions, or tactics proper, there were none. If the capacity to 'fight an irregular battle' were always the highest test of generalship, as the late General Colin¹ said it is, Raglan would have to be placed very high! But at the Alma each Division drove forward as best it could. A bit of barrier called 'the Great Redoubt' was stormed, lost, stormed again; Raglan, who had flung himself far forward till he was almost alone, seems to have won the day by getting some guns up to a critical point and enfilading some heavy

¹ *L'Éducation de Napoléon*, and other works *passim*.

Russian columns. He told Calthorpe¹ that he had 'never been in such hot fire except *perhaps* at Waterloo'. The battle lasted two hours thirty-eight minutes.² Colin Campbell put the finishing touches with the Highland Brigade. The French lost 560, the British 1,800 (Hamley³ says 2,002), the Russians 5,700. There were hardly any unwounded prisoners. There was no pursuit, though our poor thousand of splendid horsemen could have done a good deal. The French infantry could have done far more, and have done it alone, but Saint-Arnaud refused this, and also refused to advance farther till the third day after the battle.

The fortress-city of Sebastopol lies almost all to the south of a deep arm of the sea about 1,000 yards broad, and is divided also from its own fortified eastern suburb by another arm, called the Inner Harbour. On the North side of the Outer Harbour was a large fort called 'The Star', dominating all approaches except that from the East. Should we have pushed on at once after the Alma and, without any siege-guns, have attacked the North side? Well, we knew nothing of the strength or garrison of the Star or of the smaller forts around it. Moreover, we did not know how far Menshikoff was a really beaten man; that is to say, whether he would risk another battle, and fight with his back to the walls.

Kinglake thinks that a *coup de main*, without an hour's delay after the Alma, would have given us everything—South side and all—for we could have turned the big guns of the North side on to the Russian Fleet in both harbours.⁴

¹ i. 149.

² Kinglake, who was close to Lord Raglan, took a toss, from his pony's saddle slipping over its head (Calthorpe, i. 160), just as the fight began.

³ p. 52.

⁴ Cf. Greville, viii. 54-5. 'My nephew has just returned from a visit to the Crimea (Aug. 1856); the Russians told him that if the Allies had marched at once after the Alma on the North side, no resistance could have been made, and the South side must have fallen also.'

Raglan, he says, urged such an attack, but Saint-Arnaud would not agree to it. Hamley, on the other hand, says ¹ that it 'may be doubted whether this were ever seriously considered', that Burgoyne denied that it ever was considered, that Kinglake got his ideas from Todleben after the Peace, and that Todleben, in order to glorify his own subsequent defence of the South side, underrated the strength of the North side. Calthorpe, quite independently of both, and closely in Raglan's confidence, anticipates Hamley's view, adding that there was no harbour on the west of the Peninsula where our fleet could safely lie; that there was an awkward wood, of great extent, on our left when we did appear on 24th September before the North side; that the Russian flight after the battle had soon become an orderly retreat, for 'we found few traces of a beaten army'.² Kinglake was perhaps the victim of what Calthorpe calls 'shaves', i. e. rumours gathered in the barber's tent while you were being shaved.³ Yet, if the Russians were not a beaten army, Menshikoff was a beaten General, and if Raglan or Burgoyne had possessed any of their old Chief's insight into the heart of an enemy, they would surely have made some attempt to strike terror at once, with the aid of the fleets. French co-operation was, however, indispensable; and Saint-Arnaud, a dying man, and perhaps instructed from home not to be too venture-some, either was not asked, or, if asked, would not hear of it. So the three days were wasted,⁴ and, before we sighted the town on the 24th, Menshikoff had ordered a line of big ships to be sunk within the mouth of the outer harbour. This

¹ pp. 70-1.

² Calthorpe, i. 182, 186, 200.

³ In the trenches in 1914 our men called such rumours 'water-cart' because they were brought to the front line by the men who pushed up the hand-water-cart at night.

⁴ Whatever view we take of a possible attack upon the North side, it was a terrible error to waste those days. Every one in England believed Sebastopol would fall at once. On Oct. 8 Greville (vii. 192) wrote: 'The whole of last week the papers, without exception, proclaimed the *Fall of Sebastopol* in flaring and triumphant articles and colossal type. I never believed a word of it.'

would make all co-operation of the Allied fleets in any sudden *coup* impossible.

What to do, then? Our men were dropping cholera-stricken by scores, because nothing would keep them from gorging themselves with fruit as they marched through the orchards. In order not to do nothing, Raglan made, late on the 24th, the amazing proposal to march across the Peninsula and attempt the South side: at least there was one small harbour and two good roadsteads on the eastern shore in which the fleets could lie. It was a flank march across the possible front of an unknown enemy. Raglan had no idea where Menshikoff was, and that dull fellow had even less idea where Raglan was. Saint-Arnaud agreed, and on the 25th we started and took two days doing the march, of nearly twenty miles, by the heights known as 'Mackenzie's Farm'. Once we actually ran into the rearguard of the Russian army, as it marched northwards on the Bakchi-Serai road; equally astonished with ourselves, it ran away. We crossed the last of the rivers, the Tchernaya, by the stone-built Traktir Bridge on the afternoon of the 26th; this was the river which, from an aqueduct at Tchorgoun, supplied Sebastopol with water. Then we came to the deep narrow creek called by courtesy the Harbour of Balaclava, with its small town, and the village of Kadikoi in front of it. This we took for our base, the French, who now fronted as the left wing of the Allies, taking Kazatch and Kamiesch Bays for theirs.¹ Canrobert took over the command of them on the 27th, Saint-Arnaud died on ship-board on the 30th.

The numbers of the garrison of the South side, when we first appeared, are variously stated, but they were barely enough to man the walls against a determined assault: nor did they comprise any select troops. They probably believed that Menshikoff had deserted them; and there were as yet, looking landward, only three strong fortified towers, the Malakoff,² the Redan, and the Flagstaff Bastion.

¹ Reinforcements could now land, French cavalry among them, with fair ease.

² The Malakoff, a stone tower, twenty-eight feet high, with walls 5 ft. thick, was the key of the defences.

Here Kinglake was probably right when he said that an assault, at whatever cost, should have been attempted at once.¹ For every hour that it was deferred it became more difficult. For two heroes, such as Russia has seldom thrown up, at once began to strengthen the defences (whose whole circuit from sea to sea was about ten miles)—Admiral Korniloff, the inspired enthusiast, and young Colonel Todleben, the greatest military engineer of the century. Todleben was, like Gustavus Adolphus, a prophet of earth-works, and, like no one else in history, the Father and Mother of guns. As the Russian Fleet was now useless it could be stripped, not only of its 1,900 guns, but of iron, cordage, planks, and every other sort of store; best of all, of 18,000 brave sailors. Two or three ships were left, equipped with heavy ordnance, in the Inner Harbour, to add their voices to Todleben's chorus of reply.

Raglan and Burgoyne spent September 29th in a survey of the front, and orders to land the siege-trains when they should arrive had already been given. Our siege-guns were much heavier than the French, and some were heavier than the best Russian. We had four 'Lancasters', throwing a 68-lb. shot, oval-bored and rifled, ten 10-inch mortars, sixteen 8-inch guns, and the largest of the rest were 32-lb. guns. Even 18-pounders were then reckoned almost 'guns of position',² and 120 rounds per day was thought a prodigious fire. The Field Artillery and Horse Artillery had mostly 6-pounders, a few 9-pounders. On the other hand most (not all) of our infantry were armed with rifles, whose bullets would go through two men, while few of the Russians had anything better than Brown Bess muskets. Our 'Naval Brigade', turned gunners, under Captain Peel covered itself with glory in the siege, and Sir Colin Campbell, of whom more anon, was glad to get 1,100 Marines to post on the heights above Balaclava.

¹ Again Hamley (p. 89), following Burgoyne, says no; Calthorpe implies the same opinion.

² One of the Lancasters burst, and their fire was always inaccurate. It is curious to hear Calthorpe (i. 233) speak of a 'whizz-bang', which nearly killed Sir G. Cathcart.

Menshikoff must indeed have been a sluggard not to hurl forward every man he had got before we had settled in on the 'Plateau' that overlooks the town from the east and north-east, but he was slow to grasp into what a tight corner we had wedged ourselves. When he did turn round, about October 7th, he found that he could pour troops *ad libitum* (for he was constantly being reinforced from the north) into the North side, whence they could be ferried over the harbour in a few minutes. Sebastopol was never really 'besieged', for that door remained always open, and for a long time the garrison increased faster than we could kill it. And the topography will show that the Allies themselves were always liable to be besieged, and even caught between two fires; also that the British would fare the worse, for they would have to defend the most vulnerable point, Mount Inkerman,¹ as well as their own base, Balaclava. The French position lay safe behind all this, and yet we, with half their numbers, had to fulfil these two tasks, and, at the same time, to push our 'approaches in form' against four miles of the town-front, while our Allies had only six miles to deal with. In our trenches the soil was rocky, in the French it was friable. The trenches were 'opened' on October 9 and 10.

A general bombardment, to be followed by an assault, was fixed for October 17. The fleets, in spite of the objection of both the Allied Admirals, were to co-operate by bombarding the sea-facing forts. Our land-guns did their work pretty thoroughly, ruined the Malakoff, killed the gallant Korniloff, blew up a good deal of the Redan, and almost produced a panic in the town. Yet, because a couple of Russian shells fell in a French magazine and killed about a hundred men, Canrobert suspended his bombardment early in the day and for the whole of the next, and declared an assault to be out of the question. Raglan, bitterly disappointed, gave way, as he nearly always did; and too easily, for Canrobert on several subsequent occasions showed

¹ Wrongly so called: really, Mt. Inkerman is the opposite height north of the River Tchernaya.

himself 'squeezable', and a Wellington would probably have squeezed him now. Meanwhile the pounding of 1,100 guns from the ships at long range barely scratched the stone walls, and the fleets suffered considerable damage, the French losing two hundred, and we three hundred men. Lyons alone, with a small inshore squadron, taking greater risks, did produce some effect on the top tiers of guns of the North side forts. The Navy ground its teeth with rage at Dundas, and so did the 'Public' at home—quite unjustly. Day after day, for near a week, the land-guns roared; night after night Todleben, like some weird troll, found magic means to shear up his battered defences. And now, bad omen, Russian cavalry began to appear on the eastern ridges above Tchorgoun (Hamley says on the 15th).

The objective of such a movement would be our Balaclava base. Two and a half miles from the harbour there runs, from east to west, a broken line of low heights at right angles to the eastern face of the plateau; along it runs the Woronzoff road from Yalta to Sebastopol, our main road for getting stores up to our front; broad valleys lead up to these low heights on either side, and are bounded by moderate grassy slopes; from the harbour-head to the farthest point of our front line was about seven miles. The Woronzoff height was just barely 'fortified' with five so-called redoubts, each with a few guns, manned by Turks. Probably neither Menshikoff nor his lieutenant Liprandi had any idea how weak these were, or that the infantry on duty in the plain in front of Kadikoi were but a portion of the 93rd under Sir Colin Campbell. Raglan seems to have had some warning on the 24th that an attack there might be expected; on the 25th—the day of Agincourt—it came. Sir Colin could only say to the 93rd that each man must die where he stood rather than give way: 'aye, Sir Colin, we'll do that,' they growled. The redoubts in the hills were successively seized and their guns turned against us; the Turkish gunners were killed or fled. Only our cavalry, the Heavy and Light Brigades, blocked the way, the latter being almost astride the Woronzoff road. Directly the news reached

Head-Quarters Raglan and Canrobert hurried to the scene, both ordering infantry, and the latter cavalry also, to come up in support.

Liprandi's movements were of the feeblest; the first cavalry regiment he threw forward fled from the Highlanders' first volley: his next heavy columns of cavalry, gathering on both sides of the heights, advanced and halted more than once while his gunners were lining the slopes. Lord Lucan, sitting on his horse, without orders, allowed, or did not forbid, Scarlett to charge with the Heavy Brigade (900 sabres) one of these columns some 2,000 strong; Scarlett and his first 300 (5th Dragoon Guards, Scots Greys, Inniskillings) hewed their way into this mass, through it, and in eight minutes were out on the other side. The other squadrons, 4th Dragoon Guards and Royals, flew at the two flanks of the same column. The brigade, with the loss of but 78 men killed and wounded, broke the whole column into a shameful flight. Other Russian columns too began to look uncomfortable, or to trickle to the rear. If the Light Brigade, which was looking on, had then charged these retreating horsemen, it might have handled them very roughly. Cardigan, who was no man to act without orders, said that Lucan had forbidden him to charge. While he was waiting for these orders, and for infantry to arrive, the Russians were beginning to carry off the guns they had captured at the redoubts, and it was to save these, not to take the Russian batteries now established at the bottom of the North Valley, that Raglan sent Lucan orders to throw the Light Brigade forward.

Lucan misunderstood the first order and did nothing for forty minutes; and then a second, and more peremptory, order reached him, which he interpreted to mean that which no soldier could have thought it meant. And so he sent Cardigan to charge down a valley at guns a mile and a quarter away, while the slopes on both sides of that valley were lined with other guns. The angle between the two directions, the right and the wrong, was only one of twenty degrees, but the fate of the 'Six Hundred' depended upon it. Captain

Nolan, who had brought Lucan the second order, galloped frantically across Cardigan's front, to turn him to the proper line of attack, but was killed at once. The Light Brigade started with 673 sabres (13th and 4th Light Dragoons, 17th Lancers, 8th and 11th Hussars). Cardigan led his first three lines in perfect order and dressing, though the pace soon became too hot, and the gaps too great, for that. If not the first man in among the guns at the end of the valley, he was nearly the first, and some of his brigade actually got through these guns and fell upon a Russian column of horse drawn up behind them. But, if almost the first in, Cardigan was also almost the first out; he gave no orders, made no attempt to rally his shattered lines, and, with the utmost coolness, rode slowly back alone up the valley. The Russians had failed to perceive what an amazing chance was here offered to them, and the French *Chasseurs d'Afrique* were already falling upon their gunners on the left-hand slope before our survivors had fought their way back. It was all over in twenty minutes; the Brigade lost 500 horses, 381 men (247 killed). Lucan was afterwards censured for not sending the Heavies in support, but at the moment Raglan only censured him for 'losing the Light Brigade'. And he failed to censure Cardigan for leaving it leaderless at the end of its glorious feat. Calthorpe¹ voiced many people's feelings when he wrote that 'there was a very general impression that the Cavalry have been most wretchedly handled'.²

It was also a bad mistake, mainly Canrobert's, that no effort was made that day to recover and fortify the heights.³ The Russians had been so badly shaken in the morning

¹ i. 245.

² Cardigan afterwards brought an action against him for the reflections contained in his book. Both Lucan and Cardigan went home, and made fierce recriminations against each other; they were brothers-in-law and hated each other as such. Cardigan's speeches in the Lords were so egotistic and intemperate that a subaltern said 'D—n his I's'. (Ibid., i. 123.)

³ Cathcart's Division did reoccupy one (the fifth) of the lost redoubts.

that before night they might have been driven beyond the Tchernaya. But the Woronzoff road was henceforth under their fire, and Balaclava was always in danger till the end of the year. From the loss of the road came nearly all our subsequent sufferings, for the rain soon turned all the other (clay-soiled) tracks to mud, almost like that of the Ypres salient of 1914-18; and so stores, food, and ammunition might lie weeks or months in Balaclava before they could be got up to the Plateau. Only the supineness of the enemy saved us from being driven into the sea.

His one great effort to do this (and compared to it Balaclava was only a reconnaissance) was made on Sunday, November 5th. Though our real 'Crimean' sufferings had not yet begun to begin, the steady detrition caused by cholera and other sickness had already reduced the Allies, Turks included, to 65,000, of whom 20,000 were British.¹ Menshikoff had, if we may, as we certainly may, include the garrison, more than double the force of the Allies. He knew now that he must be quick, for the French approaches to the Flagstaff Bastion were getting on a good deal too well; 'we all', says Calthorpe,² 'had expected that ere this an assault on the town would have taken place, and one had actually been fixed for November 7th.' Moreover, the probable point of the next Russian attack had been pointed out to Raglan by Sir de Lacy Evans, the western end of what we called Mount Inkerman; Raglan had repeatedly asked Canrobert to send troops to help strengthen that position, but, the more the Frenchman had promised to send them, the more he had kept on not sending them. Menshikoff, indeed, was daily reinforced from the interior, though it is believed that over fifty per cent. of his advancing succours fell by the wayside. His plans for the attack of the 5th were well laid and miserably executed, for Gortchakoff with 20,000 men was left idle all day, on his Chief's

¹ Kinglake's figures: Hamley's are far less, 31,000 French infantry, 16,000 British, 11,000 Turks, while he gives Menshikoff 115,000.

² i. 333.

far left, strung out from the region of Tchorgoun. He had been intended to come in from the east and finish us off, when the several attacks from the west should have been successful. These last were to be delivered from both sides of the hill, from south and north, as well as in front. They were made more easy by the fact that, a day or two before, the Russians had actually seized the western spurs of the said hill, the very point which had excited Evans's fears. Very early on the 5th they succeeded in getting guns up to, and beyond, this point, to what we called 'Shell Hill'. Some 40,000, with another powerful reserve, were, at scheduled times, beginning before dawn, to attempt the climb; another 40,000 might be expected to take part in various sallies from the city.

The first notice of the attack was given by General Codrington, who with 1,400 men and a few guns lay on 'Victoria Ridge', between our main position (hereinafter called the 'Home Ridge' or the 'Barrier'—really the front of the camp of the Second Division, of Evans) and our siege-works outside the city. It was of good omen when Codrington pounded the first advancing columns to bits as they began their climb; they fell back at once, and little further attempt was made on that side. It was from west and north-west that the main swarms reached upwards. These slopes were covered with thick scrub—dwarf oak-bushes, perhaps. It was a dark, foggy, drizzling morning, and this favoured us in two ways, for the Russians could not see that Pennefather, in command of the Second Division that day because Evans was sick,¹ had at first but 3,000 men and twelve guns at the critical point of the Home Ridge (and at no time of the day had we over 13,000 engaged—7,400 of whom were British); moreover, the mist also hid from our men how vast were the attacking masses. Pennefather had his face mainly west-north-westwards, but, over his right shoulder, and divided from him by a depression

¹ Evans got up from sick bed and came to the Home Ridge, but gallantly allowed his subordinate to keep the command and fight the battle.

which he called the 'Gap', was another critical point mis-called the Sandbag 'battery'.¹ He was lying between the Russian guns on Shell Hill and this flank danger. He had, however, large pickets some way down his front, right, and left slopes, among the brushwood, and these, a little after dawn, began to maintain a series of Homeric combats against the Russian columns climbing up from the Tchernaya valley.

The Sandbag was the most fiercely contested point of all: it was taken and retaken seven times during the morning. Kinglake rather strangely says that most of our efforts there were wasted (and it is true that more than once the enemy swarmed past it and into the Gap), but it certainly looks as if it was a most important flank position. Raglan was very early on the ground, but he wisely made no attempt to interfere with Pennefather's method of fighting (which was, to put it mildly, original), and he certainly ordered the Sandbag to be fought for at all costs. He occupied himself chiefly in throwing every man that could be spared from the trenches on to the immediate front; French reinforcements also began to arrive. Cathcart, either misunderstanding, or in disobedience to, Raglan's orders, took his Division downhill in pursuit, or in search, of the enemy, and was killed in trying to fight his way back. The Duke of Cambridge did a good deal of shouting and swearing (he was a 'braw sweirer' but not so picturesque as Pennefather) by the Sandbag; he was not in good health at the time, and a few days afterwards the doctors sent him home. The mist gradually cleared away, yet not before every successive column of the enemy had been driven back with heavy loss—loss, however, to the defence as well as to the attack. When, a little before 10 a.m., Raglan's repeated orders and entreaties had got two heavy (only eighteen-pound!) guns up, we were able to hammer the Russian batteries on Shell Hill; then the battle began to

¹ It had been intended for guns, but there were no guns in it that day, nor could it be properly described as a 'work', still less as a redoubt, at all.

be won. Yet even then Canrobert (who had recently arrived, had been slightly wounded, and had his horse shot) was inclined to believe it lost, and was considering a general retreat of all his Frenchmen. For once Raglan prevailed, though Canrobert still considered we could only remain on the defensive. His anxiety was not unnatural, for what would happen to his camp (and ours) if Gortchakoff and his twenty thousand fresh troops should fall on them only half guarded?

And so, when at 1 p.m. the Russians began to fall back from Shell Hill, and at last from all the heights, and to seek shelter in the city or to the north, Canrobert still refused to allow French troops to pursue. The losses in this bloody battle were huge, nearly one-third of all British troops engaged (2,397 out of 7,400), nearly one-sixth of French. Yet the Russians could more easily afford to lose their ten out of eighty thousand than we our far heavier proportions. The garrison had made a fine sortie on the (extreme left) French works, and France lost another 900 men there. In spite of all our lack of leadership, all our wasted chances, during the fortnight between October 24th and November 6th, we had at least given the enemy some severe lessons in the superiority of our men to his. He respected this instruction, and henceforth contented himself with pouring his reinforcements, as they successively arrived from the north, into Sebastopol. Probably he relied, and the next few months almost proved him to be right, on the efforts of Generals January and February to starve us out. He was admirably served by spies, as well as by the news published in our newspapers. On December 6th Liprandi definitely withdrew from the heights above Balaclava, leaving merely an outpost at Tchorgoun. On December 30th we swept this away and soon afterwards (though too late) recovered the use of the Woronzoff road. On November 7th Canrobert had sent French troops to hold Shell Hill.

On the morrow of Inkerman, Raglan had to instruct his Commissary to make arrangements for wintering the army

on the Plateau. In a modern army this would be the Quartermaster-General's task; but Raglan's organization was only that of the great Duke, grown forty years older, and it was Mr. Filder and not General Airey who was technically to blame for failures in its execution. Those of us who, as boys, had the sufferings of that winter burned into our memories from the lips of the survivors, may think that I am repeating a thrice-told tale in referring to them here, but now even those who heard the tale at first hand are getting fewer, and 1854-5 is passing into 'history'. Nor do I for a moment suggest that those sufferings were a thousandth part of the aggregate sufferings endured by us and our French Allies in the Great War of our own day. The worst period of endurance on the Plateau was far shorter than that which the *old* British Army¹ endured in the trenches, October-April 1914-15. One thing is often misunderstood: a Black Sea winter is not a Baltic one, not a continuous iron business;² it is more commonly a succession of rapid changes from one brand of vile weather to another, gales, fog, frost, sleet, snow, slush; being together, perhaps, a worse *catena* for an army under canvas than a Moscow winter would have been. For no wood for huts³ could be got except by sea, and when got it could not be carried up to the Plateau.

¹ That is to say before serious relief reached it in the way of numbers.

² The first really cold night was October 29; the first severe frost was on Christmas night; the first snow a foot deep was on January 21. January was on the whole colder than February. (Calthorpe, i. 336; ii. 31, 40.) 'Good news from home, Jack, we're to have a medal,' says one starved and ragged soldier to another, on a landscape of snow and dead horses: 'that's very kind,' replies the other, 'maybe one of these days we'll have a coat to stick it on.' (*Punch*, Feb. 17, 1855.) There is little pictorial reference to the War between March and September of that year: but there is the cruelly unjust cartoon of Raglan of March 24, 'The General fast asleep'; and there is the terrible one of March 10 of the deathbed of Nicholas, 'General Février turned Traitor'.

³ Delane had paid a hurried visit to the seat of war, travelling in company with Kinglake (Aug.-Sept. 1854), and had only just missed

Another frequent misconception is that the French were better off than the British. They ought to have been so, for they had at home a real War Department, with an organization for supplying the needs of an expeditionary force. They were so inasmuch as they received constant and large reinforcements of men; inasmuch as their men were cleverer than ours, and also, perhaps, accustomed to a lower standard of comfort;¹ inasmuch as they had an actual corps of labourers to make roads, and so had good metalled roads to their two ports; inasmuch as they were less continuously overworked—for each French soldier had only alternate nights of trench-duty and could sleep in the day-time, while our men, being so few, had two of every three nights, or even a worse ratio, in trenches,² and even then were constantly employed on fatigues by day. But against this you must set the fact that the French had less food, worse tents, worse clothes, and, if possible, worse hospitals. Their 'system' worked even worse than the absence of system in 'rich, clumsy, improvident England'.³ Napoleon dared not publish in Paris the accounts of his sick soldiers, although French public opinion, less interested in the War than British, was perhaps less sensitive than ours. Further, we must remember that the sufferings of the

being at the Alma. When he got home, early in October, he went at once to Newcastle, and urged on him the provision of wooden huts, for a winter campaign was almost certain; apparently little notice was taken of his advice. (Dasent's *Delane*, i. 196.)

¹ No one who has seen anything of rural France in the War-area, since 1914, can doubt that, human being for human being, the French are a hardier, more patient, race than the British; no one can say that our civilian population would have borne what they bore.

² In the Crimea far more men went into hospital from night-work in the trenches than from any other cause: 'it was almost impossible to drain the trenches.' (Calthorpe, i. 336.) Trench-feet! If sufferings in war have been mitigated in many ways, in others they have been intensified: 'at times,' says Sergeant Laurence (*Autobiography*, p. 109), speaking of the siege of Badajoz in 1812, the trenches were in such a state of mud that it was over our *shoes*.'

³ Kinglake, vi. 213-14—how the words would come home to a 1914 man!

French were prolonged, owing to neglect from home, during the second winter, at which time our men were being fed, clothed, huddled, and petted, almost as if they had been champion bull-dogs.

Our winter sufferings were imperfectly known at home till December, and then they suddenly began to be trumpeted *urbi et orbi*. The tale, of course, reached, and very much heartened, the enemy. There was no censorship of the press, nor of letters from the Front, in *that* war. The lack of organization was no doubt very bad; not intentionally, but from mere red tape, each department, Admiralty, Horse-Guards, Secretary-of-State-for-War, Secretary-at-War, Ordnance-Office,¹ thwarted its fellows; the Treasury controlled, thwarted, and gasped at, the demands of them all. The War Office did not even possess a cipher in which it could communicate with Raglan till the end of April 1855. Some contractors, one fears, were 'profiteers': Calthorpe² (though he does not use the proper War-Office language to the effect that such and such a Division was 'issued with boots') tells us how boots arrived at the camp in packages of eighty pairs, 'and of these not more than eight or twelve pairs in each package were big enough to be worn', adding mildly, 'which does not show much forethought on the part of the authorities at home': later on he says the boots were of such poor quality that many of them were worn out in a week.³ More grimly humorous is Kinglake's story of the supply of fur coats sent out in October, and delivered in April when the weather was becoming unpleasantly warm.

This last misadventure, and indeed many of the others,

¹ One of the good results of the War was the consolidation of these departments, on the confusion between which Kinglake is eloquent. Another was the first serious suggestion (by Palmerston) for the abolition of purchase of Commissions in the army. (*Panmure Papers*, i. 209.)

² ii. 23.

³ Why did nobody ever hang a master-bootmaker? or that contractor who supplied Sir John Franklin's Polar expedition with thousands of tins of putrid meat?

sprang from the fact that Balaclava harbour was too small to allow, even in calm weather, the quick unloading of stores. Cattle died foodless and waterless, while the ships that brought them were tossing outside, waiting their turn to come in; the occasional violence of the weather was only equalled by its sudden changes, and we know from Byron that

There 's not a sea the passenger e'er pukes in
Turns up more dangerous breakers than the Euxine.

Mules in thousands, and even the precious horses of our cavalry, died of hunger. There was also much sheer lack of forethought, some of which ought to be laid at Raglan's door, for he had served a Chief who never lacked it. There were, for instance, no road-making tools, no civilian labourers, no warm clothing, no field-hospitals but tents, no trained hospital orderlies, not half enough doctors. The hospitals on the Bosphorus were undrained, unwatered, unventilated, and, at first, 50 per cent. of those who reached any base hospital died, owing to pure ignorance of the first principles of sanitary science on the part of the doctors. Even when Miss Nightingale and her devoted band of nurses arrived at Scutari, early in November, the R.A.M.C. gentlemen, in their professional pride, were too apt to say that nothing was lacking, and it was many long weeks before the Lady-in-Chief could get them to see that everything was lacking. When Jack Macdonald of *The Times* arrived, with his pockets stuffed with gold, to administer *The Times* Fund, they had much the same answer for him. It was not until March 1855 that things began to go better in the base hospitals.

Yet, while much was due to preventable mismanagement, the 'Act of God or Other the Queen's Enemies', in the shape of the terrible hurricane of November 14, was accountable for more. It was a real cyclone. Twenty-one British vessels were wrecked to pieces, most of them with all hands; and all the first great consignment of relief-stores and comforts was lost—ten million rounds of small-arm ammunition

among them. On the Plateau every tent was blown down, and the hospital tents, being the largest, went first; all fires were extinguished, nearly every building (there were very few) was unroofed. The trenches were flooded and the men were, for days afterwards, up to their knees in water or liquid mud. A blizzard of snow followed the cyclone. For days there was no means of cooking food, and raw salt pork is not a diet for sick men.

The result of these accumulated ills was utter overwork for all who could stand upright; at one time barely eleven thousand of our men were returned fit for duty. Even of these, few were really well, the vitality of all was low, and the noble doggedness of such men, in refusing to complain or 'go sick', makes the finest, but almost the saddest, part of the story. Even before the hurricane, on the evening of Inkerman day, one of the bravest and most experienced¹ soldiers, de Lacy Evans, had advised Raglan to abandon the expedition and re-embark the army. Raglan was, of course, right in refusing to listen to such counsel; indeed, though it might have been just possible during the next three or four days to re-embark, it was soon clear that the Russians might (I don't say they would) have almost destroyed our force during the attempt. Raglan was, unquestionably, too fearful of straining the Alliance by demanding from Canrobert the help that the latter could in many ways have given him, e. g. in the most essential point of all, road-making.² He was also too slow to represent to his Government how bad the conditions were, and was therefore unjustly accused of being indifferent to them. Down to the end of November, Newcastle had thoroughly supported him, in spite of the growing outcry in the London papers and the 'grousing' letters from officers at the front. These things put Raglan in a bad quandary; if he told all

¹ Not, however, the most discreet or most unselfish. He went home sick, and, being a Member of Parliament, indulged himself in the House in a good deal of scolding which he had better have left alone.

² Canrobert did give such help in the following March.

the truth, even to the Cabinet, it leaked out somehow, and was instantly telegraphed all over Europe, and especially to Petrograd. He well knew that the letters to *The Times* of its gallant, if indiscreet, correspondent on the Plateau, Mr. Russell, were spreading the news thither already. Russell was 'picturesque'; some of his accusations were based on imperfect evidence; and before the end of the year *The Times* was scattering, right and left, indiscriminate censure on every one at Head-Quarters, and was crying out for the abandonment of the Expedition, for the sending of which, six months before, it had been, far more than any individual, responsible. It chose to lay most of the blame on Raglan's patient shoulders,¹ but some also on those of Airey and Estcourt, the Chief's right-and-left-hand men. The old Duke would perhaps have hanged, would certainly have deported, 'this Mister Russell'.

And then, on December 15th, Newcastle suddenly turned round, or gave way, and began to write Raglan scolding letters. Parliament adjourned on December 23, before any 'drastic measures'—supposing such to be possible—had been suggested, and, when it met again a month later, little Mr. Roebuck, the *âme damnée* of the Independent Radicals, moved for a Committee of Inquiry. John Russell, *more suo*, resigned even before the debate on the motion,² and, when that had been carried by a large majority, Aberdeen and Newcastle resigned at once, February 1, and were soon followed by Gladstone, Graham,³ and the

¹ This led Kinglake (vi. 272) to compare *The Times* to Thersites in the Iliad. No newspaper correspondents were allowed with the French force. The value of Russell's letters (which is unquestionable) lay, not in their details, so often untrustworthy, but in their cumulative effect on the minds of (1) the Public, (2) the Government.

² 'He did not merely resign, he absconded.' (Dasent's *Delane*, i. 203.) Greville has no words bad enough for Russell's selfishness and peevishness throughout Aberdeen's Government and in the early days of its successor. It is strange to see how much Kinglake believed in Russell.

³ The complete discredit of the Tories, as possible alternatives to the Coalition, must be attributed not only to Derby's bad

remainder of the Peelites. The Queen tried Derby, tried Lansdowne, John Russell, and finally Clarendon, and it was Clarendon who told her that Palmerston was the only man. She swallowed Palmerston, after a gulp or two, and a rough untried Whig, Lord Panmure,¹ took the War Office; Clarendon, now quite reconciled to Palmerston, kept the Foreign Office. In a little while John Russell crept back, almost unnoticed, to the Cabinet. The new Government accepted the principle of a thorough inquiry into the mismanagement of the war. Panmure began on February 12 with a harsh and ill-considered scold of Raglan.² Major-General Simpson, an old Peninsula man, who had been Napier's second-in-command in Scinde, was dispatched to the Crimea as 'Chief-of-the-Staff' (an office created for the occasion); and two other Commissioners, as servants of the Inquiry Committee, were sent to bully every one on the spot. Simpson could only report that Raglan's staff was the best that could possibly have been chosen, that it was doing its work admirably, and that he considered Raglan 'the worst-used man he ever heard of': again,³ 'I never served with an army where a higher feeling and sense of duty existed than in the General and Staff Officers of this army'. And Simpson was by no means an optimist, for he considered that we were in a very tight place indeed.

leadership and *insouciance*, nor only to the distrust still felt for Disraeli, but also to the vanity and self-righteousness of the Peelites, to whom Derby was always holding out the hand. Malmesbury (to Derby, Feb. 2, *Beaconsfield*, iii. 565) wrote of Gladstone as a *Tartuffe* and a wrecker.

¹ His father was such a strong Whig that he christened his son 'Fox'. In striking contrast to this second-rate man was the new Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir George Cornewall Lewis, one of the few great political thinkers who held office in the nineteenth century.

² *Panmure Papers*, i. 58. It is not much worse than some of Newcastle's, e. g. that of January 6, but it shows the Minister swallowing, without verifying, all the popular charges against Airey and Estcourt, and betrays his utter ignorance of the conditions at the Front. The Queen told Panmure next day that she was 'much pleased with this dispatch'.

³ April 16, *Panmure Papers*, i. 152, 171.

The two Commissioners, MacNeill and Tulloch, though not very complimentary to the Q.M.G., the A.Q.M.G. (Gordon), and the A.G., still less so to Mr. Filder, found that there was little they could really 'censure', and all had only the highest praise for Raglan's own devotion to duty. Their Report took a year to draw up, and its presentation was followed, after the Peace, by a three months' inquiry in London, which heard large numbers of witnesses and ended, July 1856, with a general 'as you were'. If it blamed any one it blamed the Treasury and 'the Nature of Things'.

Meanwhile, Panmure had come to see his mistake, and from April 1855 his letters could only praise Raglan for everything that he did. Gigantic private 'Comforts Funds' were started, and ships were hired by their organizers to transport the comforts independently of the Government. Though they came very late, no one could say they came too late. The best of all comforts, however, was a railway from Balaclava to the front line; this was at work, with freight, early in March, and on April 6 for the first time it carried men. The next best was a Labour Corps¹ of 17,000 navvies, to make roads, build huts, and the like. A more doubtful benefit, thought Raglan, was the laying of a submarine telegraph from Varna to Balaclava (there was already a field telegraph from the port to Head-Quarters). This was working at the end of April, and unfortunately Napoleon used it to interfere with everything that his generals did or wanted to do; in short it enabled him, the most dreamy and unmilitary creature alive, to conduct the campaign from Paris. Lyons had succeeded Dundas in command of the Fleet, Jones had succeeded Burgoyne² as

¹ Called the 'Army Works Corps'. It was not always satisfactory; the men were not under military discipline; they were paid higher wages than the soldiers; they often went on strike. A 'Land-Transport Corps' was also created, which was under discipline. Between them they begat, after the War, the splendid 'Army Service Corps' of our own day.

² Burgoyne, at Raglan's request, remained at Head-Quarters till mid-March.

Chief Engineer, in December. In that month and in January, the worst periods of our sufferings, the comparative cessation of bombardment allowed Todleben not only to strengthen his defences enormously, but to organize several little raids on our trenches, each of which killed a few more of our fast-dwindling army.¹ In February he pushed out north-eastwards, towards the Inkerman front, some new earth-works called the 'White Works', and he seized and fortified the Mamelon Vert, a conical hill 500 yards in advance of the Malakoff. The French had at last (January 23) taken over this portion of the attack from us (and so fronted the Malakoff), and these new positions hampered them badly.

In February also, with the aid of British gunboats, Omar repulsed from Eupatoria a fierce Russian attack on that town, but failed to pursue his defeated enemy. The one bit of strategic insight that Raglan displayed was his reiterated, but vain, wish to use Eupatoria for a series of attacks on the Russian lines of communication, or to make it, as it were, play Cadiz to his Lisbon. The very opposite was done, for in April Omar was told to bring 16,000 Turks round to the Plateau, which, by that month, did not so much need them. They did good work in the last months of the war there, but they would have been better employed in relieving the Armenian frontier, where the Turkish fortresses of Kars and Erzerum were soon to be in grave danger. Omar was always crying out to be sent thither, but, when at last he was allowed to go, it was too late to save Kars. On March 2 Nicholas died (of a broken heart, men said), and Alexander II substituted Gortchakoff for Menshikoff as his Commander-in-Chief. Gortchakoff would at least defend Sebastopol to the last, and he did so.

For the first four and a half months of 1855 a low intrigue

¹ Disease killed infinitely more. It is hardly fair to contrast the conditions obtaining during the Peninsular War with these, for Wellington's army (which suffered plentifully from disease too) was perpetually on the move; whereas here was an army tied down to one or two square miles of ground for a year and more, and the lack of sanitary knowledge allowed every form of bacillus to pullulate.

of Napoleon was hanging, unknown to Raglan and largely unknown to Canrobert, over the brightening prospects of the Allies. The Emperor wanted to come out and command troops in the field for his personal glory. Sebastopol must be reserved for His Majesty to take. So, early in the year, he sent out General Niel, the engineer who had taken Bomarsund, now, however, chiefly remembered as the Marshal whose name was given to the loveliest of roses. His duty in the French Army was, like that of the niece in a Spanish priest's household, 'not accurately defined'. With Niel was sent, straight from Africa, a very different man, the hard-fighting Norman, Pélissier. Niel was intended to be a sort of animated *veto*, and he kept on talking of 'a more complete investment of the place'. In April, however, Napoleon asked himself and his Empress on a visit to Windsor, where his cleverness imposed itself on the stupidity of the Court (which still interfered far too much in the conduct of the war), and captured the rather emotional sympathies of the Queen.¹ He there produced, and got, even from Lord Hardinge, some sort of consent to, a wild scheme of dividing the Allied forces into three and assailing the Russians from three sides at once; of the chief attack² he was himself to take command. It is believed to have been Clarendon who persuaded him to relinquish this last piece

¹ Disraeli (*Beaconsfield*, iv. 5) saw him and was astonished at the smallness of his stature, 'hardly taller than our Queen'. But there is no doubt of the impression that he made on many of our statesmen; Clarendon and Cowley constantly lauded his loyalty to the alliance; indeed Greville (vii. 313) speaks of Cowley as acting the part of Foreign Minister to him as well as British ambassador. But Morley (*Gladstone*, ii. 5) quotes 'one who knew him well', as saying of Napoleon, 'scratch the Emperor and you will find the political refugee'.

² . . . 'from Aloushta, from which place he seems to know of a pass through the mountain defiles, by which he could reach Simpheropol.' (April 20, Panmure to Raglan, *Papers*, i. 157.) Napoleon had sounded the British Government on this as early as February 26th. Panmure was not indisposed to accept the idea of Napoleon going out; he also seems to have got a good many of his ideas of strategy (with which he deluged Raglan) from the same source. (*Ibid.*, *passim.*)

of folly. Even Napoleon could not prevent the great ten days' bombardment of the fortress in April, which inflicted huge losses¹ on the Russians at small cost of life to the Allies, but he could and did prevent the assault which Canrobert had again promised should follow. 'I need not tell you', says Calthorpe, writing on April 28,² 'how much disgusted we are at the vacillating conduct of General Canrobert, who never seems to know his own mind for two days together.' And Napoleon could also stop, or rather recall after it had started, the first Allied expedition to the Sea of Azof, which was intended to destroy a vital source of the enemy's supplies.

Raglan had little difficulty in 'turning down' the new triple attack plan, as soon as he heard of it, early in May; for every soldier knows that to start from widely divergent bases for a single objective is a sure road to defeat. One would have liked to hear the first Napoleon's comments on this 'picture' which his nephew was drawing. In mid-May Canrobert, suffering from Paris telegrams on the brain, was allowed to resign, was succeeded by Pélissier, and with quiet loyalty continued, at his own request, to command a Division under his successor. That showed a fine spirit in the old soldier. We had now a new Ally, for 15,000 Piedmontese troops joined us on May 8th. In this quarrel the King of Sardinia,³ soon to be King of Italy, had no sort of interest, but his shrewd Prime Minister, Cavour, saw that it

¹ Hamley (226) says that in the early summer the garrison was losing 10,000 men a month; in August, from 800 to 900 a day; indeed the conditions inside the walls must have been daily more and more terrible.

² ii, 210.

³ Victor Emmanuel visited the Queen at Windsor at the end of 1855; Greville (vii. 308) describes him as 'frightful in person but a great strong burly athletic man'. The Duchess of Sutherland said that of all the K.G.'s she had ever seen he was the only one who would have been capable of tackling the Dragon. Exeter Hall poured addresses of welcome at his feet, 'totally forgetting that he was the most dissolute fellow in the world'; the fact of his having been excommunicated by the Pope outweighed all that.

would conciliate liberal Western Europe towards the Italian cause, if he bore a hand, and the suggestion that he should do so seems originally to have come from Clarendon. No sympathy for that great cause should be allowed to hide the utter immorality of this proceeding. By the letter it was against Machiavelli's advice, given in the twenty-first chapter of the *Principe*,¹ but it was wholly in accordance with the spirit of that great Master. Napoleon, naturally, made every effort to get the Italian troops under his control, but in vain. They were decimated by cholera soon after their arrival; so they were not employed in the trenches, but kept in camp on the upper Tchernaya.

From mid-March till early June a Conference had been going on at Vienna, for Austria had again been offering her mediation.² John Russell represented Britain, and there was much talk on 'Four Points', to all of which Russia professed herself ready to agree in principle. She was willing to renounce her claims to any protectorate over the two Danubian Provinces, to any exclusive protectorate over the Christian subjects of Turkey, to any control of the Danubian navigation. But when it came to the fourth point, no satisfactory means of checking her naval preponderance in the Black Sea could be discovered. Russell, indeed, in search for some workable arrangement, strained his vague instructions to the utmost, and was prepared to allow Russia almost to resume her old position. Napoleon also was, for some time, ready to give away much, but in May he suddenly ordered his representative at Vienna to draw back.³

¹ In that chapter the Master, perhaps with too great subtlety, argues that when two dogs, each bigger than you, are fighting, you, the little dog, should come and help the under-dog, 'because he is sure to have his turn atop some day'. But he contradicts himself later in the chapter.

² Panmure evidently didn't believe in this. 'Don't look for peace or turn your eyes to Vienna,' he writes to Raglan, Feb. 15. (*Panmure Papers*, i. 65.) This was the last thing Raglan was likely to do.

³ 'The Return from Vienna': John Russell, as a page-boy, enters the Queen's room; she rushes at him and asks for the answer to the Peace proposals; 'Please M'm, there isn't any answer.'

Austria was inclined to cast on the Allies the blame of the failure of the Conference; naturally, she did not like those Italian soldiers in the Chersonese.

Pélissier, if not much of a strategist, was a man of his hands, and was barely sixty years of age. Calthorpe¹ tells us how he snubbed Generals Niel and Bosquet at a Council of War on June 4 or 5: 'Lord Raglan and I have decided on this course, and the responsibility is ours.' But he also treated Omar rudely, which was a serious blunder. If Canrobert had been too chary, his successor was to be too reckless, in spending his men's lives: the place 'should be taken, and it could only be taken by frontal attacks, at whatever cost'. Though he, far more than even Canrobert, was the victim of hourly telegrams from the Tuileries, he received them in a totally different spirit; for, as a rule, they spurred him to take a course exactly contrary to their instructions. Yet no doubt they tried his hot temper severely and at times almost paralysed his judgement. All the French Generals had believed in Raglan, even when they were refusing his earnest requests, but Pélissier went beyond them all in personal devotion to his British colleague. He at once allowed the Expedition to the Sea of Azof to be restarted on May 23rd, and it was crowned with complete success. Old Sir George Brown, recovered from his Inkerman wound, commanded the British contingent. Our sailors mopped up all the Russian coasting-craft in that sea, broke up large munition-factories, destroyed Kertch, blockaded Taganrog at the mouth of the Don, and left a few thousand Turks to hold the coast. Calthorpe² says that we there destroyed four months' rations for 100,000 men.

Pélissier and Raglan together were a poor match for Todleben, though they had in June 188,000 to the enemy's. In the background is Albert warbling at the piano a song called 'Vaterland'. (*Punch*, May 5, 1855.) The failure of the negotiation at Vienna was communicated to Parliament on May 21, and Russell made a warlike speech; but, when the Austrian Government in July published the account of how far he, Russell, had been willing to go, he was obliged to eat his own words and to resign his office.

¹ ii. 288.

² ii. 286.

121,000. The British Army did not increase in proportion to those of its Allies: recruiting was very poor at home, and at midsummer we were 40,000 short of the number of troops voted by Parliament. We ransacked the globe to raise a 'Foreign Legion'¹ of mercenaries, though with small success; we nearly got into trouble with the United States for enlisting men there. But French lives were poured out like water in the first attempt on the Malakoff (June 7-8): the White Works were seized and held, the Mamelon Vert taken, lost, retaken, and never lost again. The British, at the same time, took the position called 'The Quarries'. The second attempt, ten days later, was preceded by a terrific bombardment all the 17th; it was accompanied by a feint on the Tchernaya, though Raglan would have preferred a feint, or something more than a feint, from Eupatoria as well. And then the assault of the 18th was ruined by the most costly mistake made by any single General during the campaign. Péliissier and Raglan had agreed on two hours of final bombardment in the small hours of the morning of the 18th. On this all depended, for, though the Redan and Malakoff had been three parts ruined the day before, Todleben remounted his guns on the ruins during the night and filled every hole with sharpshooters. Then (it was Waterloo day—did any shade of the mighty Emperor trouble Péliissier's dreams?) Péliissier suddenly sent word to Raglan that he was going to attack the Malakoff at dawn without any fresh bombardment. He did so, and one French Brigadier, Mayran, actually began before his General's signal was given. Raglan saw his colleague's blunder, saw the French mowed down in swathes (he thought their storming columns far too large—six thousand men apiece—they only got in each other's way), and decided, rightly or

¹ This imitation of the 'Foreign Legion' of France was a miserable business; a German and a Swiss contingent were actually raised, and there were attempts at an Italian and a Polish. None of these troops arrived in the East before the fall of Sebastopol, though some of them helped to garrison the Plateau in the winter of 1855-6. *Mr. Punch* made excellent fun of them.

wrongly, that he must attack the Redan at once.¹ The Allies were terribly repulsed from both towers. We lost 1,500, the French 3,500, in a couple of hours. The Redan and the Malakoff were untaken still.

If the failure, followed by an attack of dysentery, killed Raglan ten days later, the loss of Todleben, painfully, though not mortally, wounded on the 18th, was of far greater moment. Any eulogy of Raglan's noble character would be out of place here. As a man he leaves on us the impression of a Sir Philip Sidney or a Lord Roberts; as Commander of an Army he is at the bottom of the second class. General Simpson, one hardly sees why, took over the Command, and his letters are the most desponding, bedraggled things imaginable. He continually begs to be relieved of his task. His counsels, if he had any to give, were wholly ignored by Pélissier, and it was now for the first time that, both at home and at the front, Raglan's services came to be appreciated. Throughout August Simpson thought that we were as far as ever from our goal, and once it was gravely proposed in London to experiment with Lord Dundonald's secret; the old man, in his 80th year, was quite ready to go out and try it himself; all he asked for was four or five hundred tons of sulphur and two thousand tons of coke.²

On the day on which Raglan's body was carried to Balaclava for embarkation, the enemy, though now almost in despair, courteously refused to fire a shot. On August 15th he made what was practically his last effort, a strong attack on the Allied positions on the Tchernaya. There were no British troops in that battle, but of French, Italians, and

¹ It had also been agreed that we were not to attempt the Redan till we saw the French flag on the Malakoff; it was a mistake, if a very chivalrous one, of Raglan's to attempt his assault under the circumstances.

² Dundonald, then Admiral Cochrane, had in 1811 offered the Government a novel engine of war. It was rejected as being too horrible, being, in fact, a form of poison-gas. 'Vapourized sulphur would endanger all life within a radius of three miles.' (*Panmure Papers*, i. 340.)

Turks, some 37,000 against 29,000 Russians in line and 19,000 in reserve. The Allies won a complete victory at a cost of 1,500 against 7,000. And hardly for a day was the more and more terrible bombardment of the city intermitted. The final assault was on September 8th. Even while that assault was being made the leading Russian columns were marching towards the bridge of boats, which had been skilfully thrown over to the North side of the harbour, on their way to evacuate the city. This time the French actually surprised the Malakoff, though even that cost them 3,000 fresh lives, and we, at a slightly lesser cost, failed to hold, though we got into, the Redan. It was Simpson's first serious task and he made a mess of it; Codrington and Markham, in their respective handling of the Light and Second Divisions, must bear part of the blame. But General Windham was not well followed by his men, few of whom were veterans, and he, too, made a (most gallant) mistake. That night the Redan was evacuated silently, and its heroic defenders followed the rest of their army out of the city and over the bridge. Every fort was blown up as the evacuation went on, and by evening of the 9th Sebastopol, an empty ruin, was in the hands of the Allies. Gortchakoff burned or sank his remaining ships, and fell back, leaving a strong garrison in the forts on the North side, to the heights by Mackenzie's Farm. Finally he destroyed the bridge by which he had crossed. Those two days had cost Russia 13,000 men. If we can say that the bravery of the Allies during this terrible year had beaten almost all records, what praise that would be adequate is left for the Russians? Their whole existence, during the latter bombardments, must have been almost like that of the Light Brigade during the famous twenty minutes of October 25th. At the end their only barracks had been huge pestilential dug-outs under the ramparts, the living and the dead lying side by side. And what adequate praise can be given to Todleben?

After their evacuation of the South side of Sebastopol, the Russians were still in a strong position, if only they could receive large reinforcements. Could Russia give them

these? Well, British and French War Offices may have been, and were, incapable and unready, but no Government in Europe was so incapable of military administration as the Military Despotism of Petrograd. The Tsar had sent legion after legion of heroes to face his enemies, and perhaps one man out of every three ¹ who started had lived to get to grips with them. But there was a limit even to Russian supplies of men, or at least of men within six months' march of the Crimea. And, as after Friedland in 1807 the first Alexander was said to have 'no soldiers left', so after Sebastopol the second seems to have had few that he could get into the field. He could, in short, do little more than bid the remnant which had escaped to the North side hold on to that and keep open its contact with the still large force on the heights beyond the Tchernaya. This they did most effectively, and the Allied Generals, Pélissier, Simpson, and Simpson's successor Codrington, considered their positions there too strong to be attacked.

Meanwhile, since June, Kars had been heroically defended by William Fenwick Williams; at the end of September his 16,000 hungry Turks had beaten off, with heavy slaughter, a great Russian assault. But he had to surrender to sheer starvation on November 28, and the possession of Kars gave Russia what the diplomatists call 'something to bargain with' at any Peace Conference. During the winter we blew up and destroyed all the remaining docks, arsenals, and stores on the South side of Sebastopol.² We sent an expedition to Kinburn at the confluence of the Bug and Dnieper,³ up the former of which rivers lay the Naval Construction-yard of Nicholaieff; Kinburn surrendered, October 16, and we destroyed all the forts at the river-mouths. We also largely reinforced, and got into something like perfection,

¹ Raglan once sent Panmure a terrible story to this effect which he got from a Russian deserter. (*Papers*, i. 106-7.)

² This was dangerous work; the city was under fire from the Star Fort.

³ 'Where the bug and the nipper meet in one bed.' (*Punch*, Nov. 10, 1855.)

our army on the Plateau, and fifty thousand British spent the winter there, well fed, housed, and clothed.¹

What was to be done with them, and how the war was to be ended, were difficult questions. A 'Council of War' sat in Paris from 9th to 21st January, and, on paper at least, concluded in favour of a powerful flank drive from Eupatoria towards Simpheropol (Raglan's old idea much extended), while a second force should remain in observation on the Plateau, ready to push the Russian rear, if it were driven to retreat, out of the Crimean Peninsula altogether. British soldiers were not enthusiastic for this scheme, and would have preferred the transference of a large force to Trebizond, or to some other port on the eastern Euxine, for the defence of the Armenian frontier and the recovery of Kars. We could not, however, disguise the facts (1) that Napoleon was quite tired of the War, if not also of the Alliance;² (2) that its ostensible objects, so far as they were attainable, were fully attained; (3) that there was again a good chance of peace through Austrian mediation;³ and (4) that, until Russians and Turks had changed their natures or abandoned their religions, the 'Eastern Question' would remain for future generations of Western Europeans to solve or refuse to solve. We had lost 22,000 British lives in deferring for some twenty years the solution of that problem; how much more than double that number France had lost will probably

¹ Codrington took over the command from Simpson on Nov. 10. Why Sir Colin Campbell, who was senior to him, was passed over, no one knows. The Queen made a feeble effort in his favour; Hardinge was strongly opposed to him. It was, however, right not to let Codrington's mismanagement of his Division on Sept. 8 disqualify him, for the blunder was more Simpson's than his own. The *Victoria Cross* 'for Valour' was instituted in February 1856; its first distribution, by the Queen in person, was in June 1857.

² *Mr. Punch's* last bitterness on the war is simply called 'Paris 1856': a beautifully dressed and *décoré* Russian Bear is walking about Paris at his ease (April 12, 1856).

³ The Sardinian Government was, not unnaturally, against any Peace at this time; it hoped the War might be extended into one for the liberation of Italy and Poland, and no doubt ideas of this kind flitted through Napoleon's inconstant brain.

never be known. Among the evil deeds of Napoleon III none is worse than the way in which he starved and neglected those of his own gallant soldiers who were left on the Plateau, alongside of our rump-fed British, for a second winter. Their sickness and death-roll were appalling, but all was hushed up.

Almost all the questions which inevitably arise in war-time had been brought up in Britain in 1854-5, and we cannot say that a satisfactory solution had been found for any of them. But the most serious thing of all was the unwillingness of the British people, even while they were crying out for war, to take service in the ranks of their own army.

The Peace Conference was opened at Paris on February 25, 1856, and the Treaty was signed on March 30th. The last British soldier left the Crimea on July 12. Russia restored Kars, restored the Danubian Delta, and enough of her gains of 1812 in Bessarabia to keep her well away from that great river. The main point of the Treaty was that Russian and Turkish ships of war were to be for ever excluded from the Black Sea. Fourteen years later the same Tsar, who had agreed to this humiliating condition, took up the scrap of paper and tore it in half *coram Europa*. But France was then in the last agonies of her defeat by Prussia, the Tsar's accomplice; and England was being governed by Mr. Gladstone.

NOTE

Had I found myself able to subscribe whole-heartedly to the opinions of Mr. F. A. Simpson, it would have been my duty to rewrite this chapter and to withhold the next three until the appearance of his next volume. When *Louis-Napoleon and the Recovery of France, 1848-56* (Longman, Green & Co., 1923), was published, the slips of this book were beginning to be made up in pages. The first reading of Mr. Simpson, early in February, had on me the effect of a cold douche. Nothing in his earlier (1909) volume had prepared me for the arguments in this one. His work is based on extensive researches among unpublished documents in our own Record Office, in the *Archives Nationales* and in the *Bibliothèque Nationale* in Paris; the French Foreign Office still withholds from inspection all diplomatic papers after 1848.

I admit at once that the book explains to me that which I had never understood, the high esteem felt for the Emperor by Lords Clarendon and Cowley. If Mr. Simpson's conclusions are true, Napoleon III was, not only the most enlightened, but also the most humane, honest, and unselfish statesman of his age; England alone, with the exceptions just mentioned, wilfully misunderstood and undervalued this very great man; who, though, admittedly, he broke an oath, allowed a massacre and a proscription (other French Governments on coming to power were far more savage), was right to sweep away the absurd Constitution of 1848; who did it, and did everything, for the benefit of the humble and the down-trodden (not, of course, without *some* thought of his own advantage); who only upset the Roman Republic in 1849 lest a worse fate, at the hand of some more fierce reactionary Power, should befall the Romans; who was so far from drawing us into the Crimean War that he longed for peace and was bitterly disappointed when each successive chance of peace, before and during the War, was lost (by English mistakes); who finally squeezed peace out of Alexander II by the threat of supporting Poland, and actually got on foot a coalition of the lesser Powers of Europe against Russia. Palmerston and (once more) Stratford de Redcliffe were the war-makers, not Napoleon.

This is strong meat. A humble compiler like myself who has studied no original documents, whose general reading has been slight, dares break no lance with such a scholar as Mr. Simpson. Yet, on re-reading his volume, I have passed from the first shock to ask myself the question: 'Is there not some special pleading here? Does not the author's extremely harsh treatment of the Orleanists in his earlier volume almost justify some scepticism? Is not he too prone to reject simple explanations of events? Is he not sometimes (e.g. on pp. 299, 300, where the reasons for the entry of Sardinia to the War are discussed) just a little too clever? Was not Napoleon III's brain full, to the top of his skull, of self-contradictory ideas, schemes, impulses, almost whims? Was his throne as stable as is here suggested? Can we accept the view—I at least am too old to accept it—that the greatest service the First Empire rendered to Europe was in making the Second Empire possible?

With fears like these in my head I have decided to let my text stand; yet not one of these fears must be allowed to prevent my expressing my admiration for Mr. Simpson's book, nor my hope that I may live to see its continuation; its conclusion I can hardly expect to see. [February 13th, 1923.]

CHAPTER VIII

HOME AND FOREIGN POLITICS,

1856-68

FEW periods have less permanent political interest than the twelve years following the Treaty of Paris. Yet few have been marked by a more steady growth of solid comfort, spreading through all classes in Great Britain. And no period since the Reformation has been marked, for intellectual people, by such a revolution in ideas as followed the publication, on October 1st, 1859, of *The Origin of Species*.¹

Sir Spencer Walpole's *History of Twenty-five Years*,² a sequel to his *History of England from the Conclusion of the Great War in 1815*, contains, perhaps, the soberest review of this and the next period. As the son and private secretary of one who thrice held the Home Office, Walpole had good opportunities, and access to much unpublished material. If he and the more brilliant author of *A History of Modern England*, Mr. Herbert Paul,³ failed to see the breakers ahead of H.M.S. Britannia, they failed in company with most of their contemporaries, both those who were driving the ship onwards before the gale, and those who would fain have lain to. It needed some far-sighted philosopher like Lecky⁴ or Sir Henry Maine,⁵ or some bold free-lance like Lord Rosebery, to point out that 'all the evils predicted by the Tories at the time of the first Reform Bill have already come to pass and do get visibly worse every day'. Two, however, of the most powerful intellects in the House of

¹ 'Which now (1860) divides with Italy and the Volunteers the attention of general society.' (Huxley, *Collected Essays*, 1893, ii. 22.)

² 4 vols., 1904-8. Completed, after Sir Spencer's death, by Sir A. Lyall.

³ 5 vols., 1904-6.

⁴ *Democracy and Liberty*, 2 vols., 1896.

⁵ *Popular Government*, 1885.

Commons, Robert Lowe and the future Lord Salisbury, gave voice to similar fears during the debates of 1866-7. I have made extensive use of three other books, Lord Morley's *Life of Mr. Gladstone*,¹ Messrs. Monypenny and Buckle's *Life of Lord Beaconsfield*,² and Lady Gwendolen Cecil's as yet unfinished *Life of Robert, Third Marquis of Salisbury*.³

The lack of great men on the political stage was more and more evident for every year that passed since the death of Peel. And the blindness of the country to the fact that none of its leaders were great adds to the tragedy of the situation. The men of experience lacked genius, and the one man of genius lacked either character, or stability, or knowledge, or all three. It is pitiful to reflect that, even before the Second Reform Bill swamped the intelligence of the electorate, the choice of the country lay between Palmerston, Russell, Derby, Disraeli, and Gladstone. The first of these had been a strong, and, on the whole, a wise, Foreign Secretary; he had finished the Crimean War *tant bien que mal*, and had shone as an administrator; it was as Prime Minister that he was fated to display his limitations. He was probably the most honest, in the broad sense of the word, of the five, but in the narrow, parliamentary, sense quite as 'tricky' as any of them. He was now becoming an adroit 'electioneer'. And it is a sad comment on the wisdom of the country and of the Commons that, when he appealed for a free hand in the China War (a war which few will now defend), he got a large majority, and that, a few months later, he had to resign, and lost for a time all his popularity, because he brought in a wise measure against foreign anarchists who hatched murder plots in England. On him, on Russell, and on Derby history has perhaps already pronounced judgement; for that on Disraeli and Gladstone⁴ we may have to wait another half-century.

¹ 3 vols., 1903.

² 6 vols., 1910-20.

³ 2 vols., 1921.

⁴ The writer once heard the following judgement: 'if Mr. Gladstone could have been kept as Permanent Secretary to the Treasury without any political power whatever he would have been worth a salary of a million a year.'

Abroad, during these years, the sinister figure of Louis-Napoleon, 'who was almost as fond of conferences that were never intended to meet as John Russell was of Reform Bills that were never intended to pass',¹ still flickers over the film, and apparently dominates the stage. In reality he

doth walk in fear and dread,
because he knows a frightful fiend
doth close behind him tread.

It is not always the same fiend; now it is Orsini, or some other stick-at-nothing Italian nationalist, now it is Count Bismarck, now it is Camillo Cavour,² now it is some outraged section of the French nation, which begins to feel the folly of having endowed such a man 'with such an awful power of mischief'.³ There are great Causes being staged too; the Union of Italy, the Union of Germany, the abolition of American slavery, of Russian serfdom; Napoleon would like to have a hand in all these, but often has to draw back with burned fingers. Our own Reform Bills and Church-rate squabbles taste of very small beer compared to these Causes; yet we must not forget that most foreign nations had, however unconsciously, sat at the feet of Dame Britannia to learn the true meaning of *principatus et libertas*. In these Causes our generous, if often stupid, people took, on the whole, the right sides, though not always for the right reason; they were, for instance, pro-Italian mainly because they hoped to see the Pope abolished.⁴ In the American Civil War, we were torn in half, partly because of the gallant struggle made by the South and the ill temper displayed towards us by the North. German unity was less popular

¹ Dasent's *Life of Delane*, i. 308.

² I beg his pardon for bringing him into such company; there was nothing fiendish in him, but, to wring his pound of flesh (a liberated Lombardy) from Napoleon, he had to put on the mask of a fiend.

³ Greville, viii. 249.

⁴ The Religious Tract Society assiduously distributed Protestant literature in Italy, including 24,000 copies of *Sermoni del Rev. C. H. Spurgeon*. (Grant Duff, *Notes from a Diary*, 1851-72, p. 179.)

because we could see by what brutal means it was being brought about. Yet, though few foresaw its ultimate consequences,¹ our not unnatural distrust of Napoleon led us to welcome his overthrow in 1870. We would readily have fought Russia in 1863 to help the Poles, fought Prussia in 1864 to save the Danes, fought Austria at any time to liberate Italy. It was not true then, or at any time, to say that Britain preferred money-bags to great Causes.

The first Parliamentary battles after the Peace turned on the payment of the bill for the Crimean War. Half the cost had been defrayed by taxation, and half (some thirty-three millions) had been added to the National Debt. Palmerston and his Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir G. Cornewall Lewis, had to stand up to volleys from Bright and his Radicals in front of them, to volleys from the left from Gladstone, denouncing every one of Lewis's expedients, to volleys from the right from Disraeli, denouncing militarism because the Premier did not want to throw away *all* the lessons of the war. We had on our hands a little war with Persia, whom the Tsar had egged on to attack our Afghan ally at Herat. To finish this off successfully (March 1857) was the first task of Lord Canning, the new Viceroy of India, by the hands of Outram and Havelock. Before this was over, came the Second Chinese War, and that was at once interrupted by the Indian Mutiny.

Already in 1840-3 we had, by force of arms, compelled the Chinese to open certain 'Treaty-ports' to foreign trade, largely for the benefit of our Indian opium-growers, and we had taken for ourselves the island of Hong Kong. But the terms of the Treaty of 1843 had not been fulfilled at the greatest of all the ports, Canton, and there were as yet no European representatives at Peking. Both France and America shared in the benefits of the trade, and China herself benefited more than any one. The British teapot, strength and stay of a million humble homes, seemed almost

¹ Lord Morley (*Cobden*, p. 819) says that Cobden did foresee some of them, including the aggressive designs of Prussia against France, as early as 1861.

to excuse strong measures, and perhaps Palmerston's cause was a better one than he made it appear. Yet he almost jumped at the chance of forcing Canton open, and provocations, on a coast swarming with pirates and utterly unpoliced, were seldom wanting. There was a bad provocation, involving an insult to the British flag, by a governor of Canton, in 1856, and it was badly handled by our agent at Hong Kong. Still, the argument remains that, if China were so stupid as not to wish for trade, no one was justified in forcing it on her. Both Tories and Radicals used this argument with effect, and Palmerston was beaten in the Commons in March 1857. Gladstone, in denouncing 'this iniquitous case', was 'so influenced by spite and ill humour that all discretion forsook him'.¹ The ill-compacted opposition, however, delivered itself into the hands of the aged Prime Minister. He went to the electors with *civis Romanus sum*, and 'this insolent barbarian at Canton', on his lips, and brought back such a fine majority as was not common in those days of equally-balanced parties. Radical after Radical, even Cobden and Bright, lost their seats,² and there were 150 new members, mostly of moderate Whig (i. e. Palmerstonian) complexion. Lord Elgin was dispatched on a special mission to China, and the war which followed is now mainly remembered for his fine audacity in diverting to India some of the regiments destined for Canton when the news of the Mutiny successively reached the Cape and Singapore. Canton was taken early in 1858, and some sort of submission was made, but it needed a serious campaign, met by the Chinese by a gross piece of 'barbarian' treachery (when open resistance had failed), before an Anglo-French force could occupy Peking in 1860. During the War, Elgin, almost the first Englishman since the famous 'Bill Adams' to set foot in Japan, visited Yeddo, and got a treaty allowing Great Britain to establish consuls in a few Japanese ports.³

¹ Greville, viii. 93.

² Cobden was out for two years, Bright was returned for Birmingham in July.

³ Admiral Stirling had put into Nagasaki in 1854 and concluded

At home, while the terrible news of the Mutiny was trickling through, and Greville¹ was laying it all to the account of 'Exeter Hall and the missionaries', the chief parliamentary excitement of 1857 was derived from listening to the twenty-nine speeches made by Mr. Gladstone against the Matrimonial Causes Bill for setting up a Divorce Court, to which Court all probate business was soon also transferred. This brought with it the abolition of 'Doctors' Commons', the establishment off St. Paul's Churchyard, whereat Mr. Weller senior had been provided with a second wife.² Samuel Wilberforce, Bishop of Oxford, led in the Lords the opposition to the Divorce Bill, one great mistake of which was the refusal to a wronged wife of the relief it granted to a wronged husband.³ In the same session Palmerston administered a dose of what Disraeli called 'Daffy's Elixir', in the shape of a promise to consider Reform in the next session. He knew that few people cared about it, but it looked well on a programme; and he was now to have, as Russell was to have in 1866, at least the satisfaction of proving the dishonesty of the Tory Governments, which in '59 and '67 espoused the cause they had so vigorously and so recently opposed. While Palmerston was preparing in 1858 to transfer the Government of India from the Company to the Crown a bomb burst under him.

More material bombs, then called 'infernal machines', some sort of convention allowing British ships in distress to use Japanese harbours. Elgin's Treaty was hardly permanent. Japan closed, and again reopened, her ports in 1863; she sent envoys to several European countries during the sixties and early seventies. But not until the closing of her long Civil War in 1877 was continuous peaceful commerce possible.

¹ viii. 108.

² *Pickwick Papers*, Chapter X. 'Gretna Green' marriages ceased to be valid on Jan. 1st, 1857, the Act invalidating them having been passed in the previous year.

³ Marriage with a deceased wife's sister is at last legal, but many hardships still remain to be redressed, the Churchmen having but one answer to all pleas for humanity and morality: 'your husband (or wife) may be a homicidal lunatic and confined for life, but your matrimony is indissoluble. The Bible says so.'

had been manufactured in England—no one denied that—and consigned to some Italian anarchists in London for the purpose of killing the Emperor of the French. Our own generation, too familiar with such things, can hardly realize the horror felt for them in 1858, but even to-day it is only in Ireland that murder is reckoned honourable, and murderers admitted (provided they kill enough loyal people) to political compacts. The anarchist Orsini meant to kill Napoleon, because Napoleon, who had once belonged to a secret society for the liberation of Italy, had not yet effected that purpose. Orsini succeeded in giving his victim such a fright that schemes for that liberation at once began to take shape in his brain. Napoleon was not killed, though over a hundred persons were killed or wounded when Orsini threw his bombs in Paris in January 1858. The criminal had come from London with a forged passport, and our police had warned the French police to look out for him.

Now Napoleon was a 'friendly sovereign', not only in diplomatic language, but in truth. He had had many chances of picking a quarrel with us, and, though he too often pretended to lean in that direction, he refused them all—not in the least from virtue, but from self-interest. Every conceivable reparation was therefore due from us, and we had small reason to complain when some French soldiers, in congratulating him upon his escape, called London 'a den (*un repaire*) of assassins'. Other countries had intelligible grounds for growling at the receptions we were in the habit of giving to exiled 'patriots', whom they called 'rebels'. The gulf, it is true, between a Garibaldi or a Kossuth and this man Orsini was as wide as that between, say, O'Connell and Michael Collins, but we could hardly expect foreign Governments to understand that. It is also true that both the French Foreign Office and our own made bad mistakes over the affair. Yet Palmerston was surely right when he brought in a Bill to make conspiracy-to-murder (hitherto only a misdemeanour) into a felony. Suddenly, and quite to his surprise, a wave of passion swept over the House of

Commons: '*nolumus leges Angliae mutare*';¹ especially, 'at the bidding of a foreign despot!' 'Britain is an asylum for all political exiles!'—and so on. By a snatch division in February, the House being only two-thirds full, the second reading of the Bill was defeated by 19 votes. Palmerston at once resigned. 'John Russell had led the yelp against him.

For the second time, therefore, Derby and Disraeli had to take office with a large majority in opposition; they held it for barely a year. They were in the main the 'Old Gang', Walpole, Malmesbury, and so on. Their most distinguished recruit was the future Lord Cairns, of grim Ulster blood, one of the greatest lawyers of the century, who now became Solicitor-General. Disraeli offered mountains and seas to Gladstone if he would join, and Gladstone's refusal was based perhaps as much on personal dislike of Disraeli as on his reckoning that, while his chances of succeeding to the leadership of the Conservative party were not improving, he had in his own pocket an almost certain succession to that of the Liberals. The Ministry's year was by no means barren;¹ it abolished the Property Qualification for members of the Lower House:² it began to drain London, the smells from whose river ascended straight into the nostrils of honourable members;² it finished the Government-of-India Bill.

¹ Quoted by Bracton, as from the Parliament of Merton, 1234. (Holdsworth, *History of English Law*, ii. 171.)

² The session of 1858 had to be prematurely closed on account of these smells. The Metropolitan Board of Works, created three years before, was empowered to levy a rate on London householders to defray the expenses of constructing a vast system of drainage, the first section of which (the southern) was opened, with a *cloaca maxima* ten miles long, in 1864. 'London improvements', numerous as they had been in the early years of Victoria, had hardly kept pace with the needs of a great Capital. The first wood pavement had, however, been tried in Oxford Street in 1839, the Thames Tunnel had been opened in 1843, Victoria Street, Westminster, in 1851; Smithfield Market was closed in 1855, 'Bartholomew Fair' being held there for the last time that September (it had gone on continuously since Henry I's reign); Victoria Docks date to 1855, the great

The old East India Company came to an end, in spite of a wise protest from its most distinguished clerk, J. S. Mill.¹ Mill had been, and to some extent still was, an extreme Radical and doctrinaire, yet he fully realized that the principles of his school, and of his treatise on *Liberty*, should never be applied to an Eastern people. It must have been indeed a strange combination of ignorance, doctrine, and vote-catching, that induced the Radical Government of 1906 to throw all his warnings to the wind and let loose the dragon of Democracy on India.

In Derby's Ministry also was passed the 'nasty great ugly Jew Bill', which, portrayed as a beetle by *Mr. Punch*,² had so often crept up the floor of the House of Lords and 'frightened a pack of old women'. Mr. Rothschild was therefore at last able to take his seat for the City of London. The Bill was passed, not because the Chancellor of the Exchequer (though his advocacy of it had been long and honourable) was of Jewish descent, but rather in spite of that fact. All but three of the bishops voted against it, and the resistance Reading Room at the British Museum, and the South Kensington Museum, to 1857.

Later London 'improvements' before 1880 may, perhaps, be summarized here. Four bridges were built or rebuilt in the sixties, Westminster, Lambeth, Southwark, Blackfriars. The Metropolitan Railway, commonly called the Underground, dates from 1863; the first section of the Thames Embankment, begun in 1864, was opened in 1868, Holborn Viaduct in 1869. The first exhibition of the Royal Academy in its new premises at Burlington House was in 1869. The lions in Trafalgar Square appeared in 1867; an older and even uglier lion, but one beloved by all Londoners, disappeared in 1874 from the top of Northumberland House, when that house was demolished to make a new street from Charing Cross to the Embankment. The dreadful Albert Memorial in Kensington Gardens began to insult British taste in 1875. Temple Bar was removed in 1879.

¹ Mill showed how the desire to impose Western civilization on the East would be more real, more dangerous, when controlled only by a Secretary of State (whose position would depend ultimately on ignorant English voters), than when checked by those expert officials of the great Corporation, whose lives had been passed in the study of Indian problems.

² Vol. xvii, p. 17, July 1849.

rested wholly on religious bigotry; the danger of admitting to full citizenship a race which owns no national allegiance, but controls all nationalities by the sordid power of gold, seems to have been quite unrealized at the time; and the result is only another instance of the deep tragedy which so often overtakes human efforts for justice and equality. The Ministry fell in April 1859 over its own dose of 'Daffy's Elixir'. Yet, if there had to be a Reform Bill, Derby's of that year was reasonably wise and moderate, for it contained clauses to secure representation of minorities, and special representation of educated persons, and of thrifty persons. On the other hand the Tories were not the people to introduce it. Derby dissolved when beaten on it, and, on finding that at the General Election he had only gained twenty-four seats, he resigned.

There followed a long interval during which, as in 1855, the Queen tried all round. In June she had again to fall back on Palmerston, and Palmerston was now to be installed for life. He wanted Clarendon for his Foreign Secretary, but Russell claimed the post and would take nothing else. It seems to have occurred to no one to leave him out altogether; least of all did it occur to himself that his recent ill behaviour to Palmerston disqualified him for office. Gladstone, who had allowed Derby to send him on a fruitless mission to allay discontent in the Ionian Isles,¹ accepted the Exchequer under a Premier whom he detested. He naturally expected that a gentleman of seventy-five would not hold the helm long, and then—— It was in 1860 that Charles Villiers told Greville² that 'there are sixty or seventy members of a Radical complexion who constitute themselves followers of Gladstone, and urge him on to every sort of mischief . . . it is impossible to calculate the course of a man so variable

¹ These Islands had been made a British protectorate in 1815: we gladly handed them over to Greece in 1863. When King Otho of Greece abdicated in 1862, among many names suggested for the Greek throne was that of Παύλος himself! It would have served him right if he had been made to accept it. Another name brought forward was that of Prince Alfred, Victoria's second son.

² viii. 320.

and impulsive'. Cobden, who had also been abroad, was surprised, on his return, to be invited to take the Board of Trade. Bright (wrongly, one thinks) persuaded him to refuse; a happy accident was, however, to throw a greater task in his way. Jock Campbell, still busy adding to his immortal *Lives of the Chancellors* (with special reference to those who were still alive), at last got the Great Seal, and died in harness two years later.

Palmerston at once allowed Russell to play the Reform Bill Farce to an extremely bored audience.¹ If the Bill was not 'talked out' it was only because nobody could be got to talk about it, and it was soon quietly withdrawn. The Government had, or believed it had, more serious fish to fry. In deference to his would-be murderers Napoleon had been preparing from January 1859 to attack the Austrians in Lombardy. He had made a secret promise of this to Cavour in the previous July, and Cavour possessed terrible means of holding him to his bargain. Yet at the same time he was allowing a fairly strong anti-British propaganda in the French army and press. This we have seen beginning in 1858, and it continued far into 1860. There is now every reason to believe that the Emperor would never have allowed it to bear fruit. Yet he knew that an Austrian war would be unpopular in France, an English war popular.² He was between several fires; his murderers told him one thing, his soldiers another, his Papists a third. His common sense ought to have told him that he had nothing to lose, and everything to gain, from keeping the peace of Europe.

¹ In *Gryll Grange*, written in 1860, Peacock took off Russell admirably as 'the Gracchus of the last Reform Bill, the Sisyphus of the present. . . . Thirty years ago Lord Michin Malicho had several cogent arguments in favour of Reform; one was that the people were roaring for it and therefore they must have it. He has now in his favour the no less cogent argument that the people do not care about it, and that, the less it is asked for, the greater will be the grace of the boon.'

² 'If I am asked', said Lyndhurst in the Lords on July 5, 'why I cannot place reliance on Napoleon, I reply because he cannot place confidence in himself.'

It was Derby's Government that first had to face this scare. Malmesbury at the Foreign Office knew his Napoleon better than Palmerston, and shared none of the latter's fears of invasion. But Malmesbury did not know his Cavour, and wrongly believed that diplomacy could keep the peace in Italy. British fears, however, if unjustified by events, were real, and produced, in the spring of 1859, the Volunteer movement, which, said Lord Wolseley in 1890, 'would be remembered as the greatest event of Victoria's reign'.¹ Gladstone himself could hardly have poured colder water on this outburst of national 'militarism' than Derby and Disraeli now did, and it was left for Palmerston to give it a steadily progressive support. It was, as we all realize now, the very antithesis of militarism, the very panacea for that evil. Yet terrible things were prophesied at the time on the dangers of 'arming the people', and no artillery was trusted to Volunteer hands for many long years to come. By May 1861 there were 160,000 civilians in arms, and the National Rifle Association was teaching the best of them to shoot straight. Palmerston was perhaps wrong when he said 'steam had bridged the Channel', not so wrong when he pointed out that railways had made it easy for a force to be collected far inland and rapidly brought to embarkation.

Was he wholly mistaken in wishing to spend large sums on the defences of ports and dockyards? It was an unfortunate epoch, says sapient posterity, in which to effect this insurance, for the sciences of fortification and gunnery were rapidly progressing. Answer: they usually are progressing, and your argument would lead us to continue to neglect such insurance. Palmerston also greatly increased the Naval expenditure, and Disraeli abused him for 'bloated armaments'—a phrase which was to be cast up against himself in later years. Again, says posterity, why build costly ships just when iron is driving out wood? Again there is but one answer, Adam Smith's, 'defence is of more importance than opulence'. It was Sidney Herbert, at the War Office, who first, in 1859, called for a fortification scheme, and ten millions were

¹ *Life of Edmond Warre*, p. 188.

subsequently voted for it, their expenditure to be spread over a series of years. Gladstone very nearly resigned as a protest against this insurance, but, as Palmerston told the Queen, even that loss would have been a lesser evil than the loss of Portsmouth or Plymouth. By 1863, the 'scare' being over for the time, retrenchment of all such expenditure set in, and continued for nearly a decade after Palmerston's death.

Napoleon and his ally Victor Emmanuel defeated the Austrians in Lombardy after some desperate battles, and thereby stirred the whole of Italy to one fierce cry for liberation, liberation not from Austria only, but from Austrian-protected kings, grand-dukes, popes, cardinal-legates, and all their kind. Napoleon shuddered at what he had evoked, shuddered still more at the horrors of the battle-fields; he patched up a hasty peace (which, indeed, procured all Lombardy for his ally), and scuttled back to France to take his covenanted rewards, the County of Nice and the Duchy of Savoy. Instantly, State after State beyond the Alps rose in insurrection, and each voted its own annexation to Victor Emmanuel's new 'Kingdom of Italy'. By the end of 1860, when King 'Bombino' of Naples had been driven by the gallant adventurer Garibaldi out of Sicily and Naples, only Venetia remained Austrian, and only a little strip round Rome remained 'Papal States'. Outside Court circles the sympathy and joy of our people were great. Palmerston and Russell were lauded to the skies for their open expression of it, and indeed they deserve high praise. But they deserved less praise when they fanned the unreasonable wrath with which we greeted Napoleon's annexation of Savoy, wholly on the French slope of the Alps, and Nice, which is west of the Alps altogether.¹ There is, however, just this to be said for our fears; these two provinces had been the first things grabbed by the French Revolutionists in 1792, and within a few weeks they had grabbed Belgium also. And the dream of re-annexing Belgium, and thereto the whole Rhine

¹ This annexation had been part of his bargain with Cavour in 1858.

frontier, was constantly flickering through Napoleon's brain, and sometimes played a part in those secret negotiations with other Powers on which he loved to embark. Our Foreign Office doubtless knew something of his dreams, and it is notorious that the least paw laid upon Belgium would have meant war at once.¹

The real event, and a very great event, of 1860 was the Commercial Treaty with France that bears the name of Cobden. It was to prove an immense benefit to both countries. Neither Palmerston nor Russell cared much for it, but Gladstone carried them with him in support of it. A leading French economist, M. Chevalier, had recently dropped suggestions in favour of it in England, and something of the kind had been mentioned even in Peel's time. Cobden, on the eve of a long sojourn in Paris, had visited Gladstone in September 1859, and Gladstone got leave for him to sound the *terrain*. Certainly Cobden and Napoleon were an oddly assorted pair of negotiators, and the height of the war-scare was an odd period for such negotiation. The Emperor loved to whisper 'don't let any of this leak out to my ministers', and, indeed, he risked much popularity with French manufacturers by agreeing, as he did in January 1860, to the principle of such a treaty. The details took many months to arrange, but by the end of that year France had agreed to reduce largely her duties on British coal,² iron, machinery, and many manufactured articles depending on these, while we correspondingly reduced ours on her brandy, wine, and silk. Lords Stowell and Sidmouth would have wept to think that the reign of port wine would soon be over. Within twenty years our exports to France had trebled, our imports from her more than trebled.

Gladstone in 1860 supplemented the Cobden Treaty with

¹ 'The Emperor's mind is as full of schemes as a warren is of rabbits, and, like rabbits, they go to ground for the moment to avoid notice or antagonism.' (Palmerston to Cowley, April 1860, Ashley, ii. 182.)

² The great northern coal-field round Béthune, part of which we were to save for France in 1914-18, had hardly yet begun to be productive.

another 'Free-trade Budget' like that of 1853, sweeping away over three hundred import-taxes and leaving only forty-eight articles subject to duty. The evil of such wholesale abolition, instead of a large reduction of tariffs, lay in the fact that it precluded any preference in favour of imports from our own Colonies. It drove Colonial democracies, themselves ignorant, short-sighted, and ungrateful, to the strong systems of protection which they keep in force against us to-day. To take but one instance, Colonial timber might surely have been admitted free and a slight duty maintained on foreign timber. Lord Robert Cecil,¹ both in his speeches and writings, pointed out the contrast between Gladstone's 'pursuit of a theoretic principle' and Peel's practical measures of Free-trade. The only duties Peel wholly wiped out were those on the raw materials of British industries, whereas Gladstone recklessly wiped out those on articles of foreign manufacture. Lord Robert also bravely ran amok against the cry of the age for 'cheap government', pointing out that, the more Governments improved, the more costly they must become, and ought to become.² An interesting sequel to the Commercial Treaty was a letter from Cobden to Palmerston at the end of 1861, suggesting an agreement between France and Britain for disarmament, at least of fleets, on both sides. Cobden's vision stretched out to a future not yet reached, and perhaps never to be reached safely in this singularly imperfect world.

Palmerston, it is often said, kept office more by his hold over the Opposition than by that over his own party, and it is so far true that Derby was by no means anxious to upset him. Disraeli, on the other hand, was always watching for a chance of doing this. Though Derby set a high value (not without a few qualms of mistrust) on Disraeli, the rank and file of the Tories did not, and the restless lieutenant continually strained at the leash, and frightened his captain by coquetting with Bright. 'To crush the Whigs by combining with the Radicals was the first and last maxim of

¹ Afterwards third Marquis of Salisbury.

² *Salisbury*, i. 337 sqq.: cf. also my vol. ii, p. 247.

Mr. Disraeli's parliamentary tactics; our opponents little know the deep and bitter humiliation masked by the outward loyalty of the Conservative party votes.' ¹ It is also true that Palmerston looked askance at the fiery career of his own lieutenant, Gladstone, in spite of the jubilation with which his budgets were greeted by the partisans of 'everything cheap'. In 1860 there was an explosion when Gladstone proposed to repeal the excise on paper; the Lords threw out his Bill, and a question arose whether they had a 'constitutional' right to do so. Gladstone leaned towards Bright, who wanted to go bald-headed to an attack on the Lords, but the Premier, who was not ill-pleased at their action, poured oil on the water. The repeal was achieved in 1861 when it had become a clause in the budget; Mr. Gladstone 'carrying every stitch of Free-trade canvas in the teeth of a tempest'. ² The repeal enabled newspapers to be sold for a penny, and 'it was cheap newspapers that made Gladstone's popularity'. When we reflect on our cheap newspapers of to-day we shall agree that no more appalling indictment of a hero was ever drawn by a biographer. The real benefit that Gladstone gave the nation in 1861 was the creation of the Post Office Savings Banks. Two dangerous rocks lay immediately ahead, and we can hardly congratulate our Foreign Office on its handling of either crisis. The former, the American Civil War of 1861-5, came as a bolt from the blue; the latter, the quarrel between Denmark and Germany, had long been foreseen.

The real question at issue in America was the right of any State, or group of States, to secede from the Federal Union; incidentally it turned upon the maintenance or abolition of negro slavery. The rift lay far back, in the loose bond created by the Constitution of 1787, yet no closer bond would then have found acceptance with the new-made American nation. Every subsequent decade had widened the rift

¹ *Salisbury*, i. 90. What a comment is this on the politics of 1919-22!

² *Gladstone*, ii. 40. The old doctrine was that the Lords could reject, but not amend, a 'money Bill'.

between the Southern and the Northern States of the Union. While the South continued to think of this Union as a compact between independent communities, to the North it had become a fundamental law, and by 1860 the North was prepared to go all lengths in the coercion of the South. Slavery was but one of the items in the quarrel, and a Northern politician could say openly, 'I do not wish to have the slave emancipated because I love him but because I hate his master'. The spirit of envy, which lies at the root of all democracy, was seldom more concisely expressed. 'The minority can enforce no rights and the majority can commit no wrongs.' President Lincoln was at one time (1863) prepared to arm the blacks against their masters: the Southern leaders were almost ready to arm them for their masters and to free them as the price of victory.¹

For tender-hearted people in Britain slavery was the point. Rivers of righteous tears had been shed in humble households over *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. For statesmen, in every European country that traded with America, the question of the blockade became paramount. Had the North, which alone had anything resembling a Navy, the right to prevent the South from exporting its cotton and tobacco to Europe, some parts of which would suffer fearfully if the supply were cut off? Above all Lancashire, which lived by its cotton manufacture, must suffer, and Lancashire was Gladstone's native county. President Lincoln proclaimed a blockade of the Southern ports in April 1861. Nearly all Free-trade sympathies, Gladstone's especially, and for a time even Cobden's, were at once enlisted for the South. This was no doubt the reason why Disraeli was ostentatiously neutral, if not pro-North, and he took the opportunity to court Bright, whose Quaker sympathies outweighed his Free-trade prejudices. Bright gradually brought round Cobden,

¹ The proposal was rejected only by narrow majorities at Richmond towards the end of the War. The whole question is most admirably illuminated by a lecture delivered by Sir John Acton in Jan. 1866, reprinted in Lord Acton's *Historical Essays and Studies*, ed. Lawrence and Figgis, 1919, 123 sqq.

though the latter never ceased to denounce the blockade. Meanwhile, all who sympathized with the liberation of Italy, all who hoped for that of Poland, were drawn South-wards. What conceivable right had the Federal Government, whose whole origin had been in revolt against coercion, to coerce the South to remain within a Union which had become intolerable to it? Gladstone's 'blazing indiscretion', to the effect that the South 'would make a nation' (in a speech at Newcastle in October 1862), reflected this 'pro-rebel' feeling, and it was naturally interpreted to mean that our Government was on the point of recognizing that nation. Finally, the North had little claim on British forbearance; except in the brief war of 1812-14, it was from the North that all the provocative twistings of the British Lion's tail had come. America had shown towards us, for a century past, all the insolence that a powerless unmoral State can show towards a powerful moral one. And this insolence was now increased tenfold, in the mouth of every one but President Lincoln.

We rightly began by recognizing the South as 'belligerents'—i. e. not mere rebels, as the North called them—and, although this gave dire offence at Washington, Washington had to follow suit within six weeks.¹ When, in November 1861, two agents of the 'Confederate States of the South', on their way to Europe to plead their cause, were forcibly taken by a Yankee captain off a British mail-boat (in defiance of all international custom), our indignant protests very nearly produced a war, and, indeed, war was only averted by the tact of three persons, the Prince Consort (who toned down John Russell's dispatch on the subject), Lord Lyons, our ambassador at Washington, and President Lincoln himself. Lincoln, in the teeth of his Cabinet, released the two envoys at the end of the year. His action was, no doubt, quickened by the rapid assembling of the British Fleet in West Indian and Canadian waters. Six months later there was another crisis when British connivance, almost to be laid at the doors of our Foreign Office, allowed the *Alabama*, a privateer built

¹ See, on the whole subject, *The Neutrality of Great Britain during the American Civil War*, by Prof. M. Bernard, 1870.

for the Southerners, to escape from Liverpool, pick up arms at the Azores, and do a lot of damage to Federal shipping. Palmerston himself gave no lead to public opinion. The fact was that he, and most other people, expected the South to win without European mediation, and until the last year of war this result seemed the more probable. Napoleon kept on pressing for a joint mediation, and perhaps that of itself disposed Palmerston against interference. For in 1861 Napoleon had cajoled the Spaniards and ourselves into a joint attempt to put down anarchy in Mexico, and to recover debts owing to us, and it was only when we discovered his selfish game there that we withdrew, and left him to dissipate his resources in a vain effort to put an Austrian Archduke on a Mexican 'throne'. This business, which could not have been begun but for the Civil War in America, dragged on till 1867, when the French troops were withdrawn and their Archducal *protégé* was shot by the Mexicans.

If we were not to break the blockade of the Southern ports, we had to face the starvation of Lancashire, whose 'lads' bore their sufferings bravely. Huge sums were subscribed by charity; the rates were spread over the whole county; 'relief-works' were set on foot by Parliament. The year 1862 was the worst, and then very slowly some supplies of raw cotton began to trickle in from India, Egypt, and other Eastern countries. Had not every other industry in Britain (many being actually stimulated by the American Civil War) been positively 'humming', the suffering would have been much greater. Even after the War it was long before the ruined South could feed the Lancashire looms again, for Quashee, now a man and a brother, naturally worked as little as it pleased him.

The other, the long-foreseen, trouble was the dispute between Denmark and Germany over the Duchies of Slesvik and Holstein. Even in this there was a factor both unforeseen and *incompris*, namely Count Bismarck, the minister of that King William of Prussia whose son had recently married our eldest princess. If statesmanship means the attainment of political ends by fair or foul means, Bismarck was, after

Cavour's death in 1861, the one statesman in Europe. In 1863 he got a chance of measuring Palmerston and Russell over the Polish Question. The Poles rose in insurrection against their Russian tyrants, and, as Russia was not the only country which oppressed its Poles, Bismarck, who always set a high value on Russian friendship, told the Tsar that, in case of need, he would help him to crush them. It was unfortunate that our suspicion of Napoleon prevented a joint protest of England and France against the cruelties exercised when 'Order was restored in Warsaw'.¹ More legitimately still, we and France might, as co-signatories of the Treaties of 1815, have protested against the continuous evasion of the promise of Alexander I to grant Home Rule to Poland. France was the oldest friend of Poland, and (since 1856) a new friend of Russia, and some joint protest might at least have been received with courtesy in Petrograd. Yet, if neither country were prepared to fight for Poland, perhaps such protests would best be left unuttered. Russell, nevertheless, protested, and was told by the Tsar to mind his own business. Disraeli made great capital out of this futility; he had recently met Bismarck,² and that astute person, who loved to tell the truth when he thought no one would believe him, had unfolded to him most of his European projects.

The first of these projects was an attack on Denmark. King Frederick VII died in November 1863, leaving the Duchies of Slesvik and Holstein (which had laws of succession different from those of the Danish Kingdom) 'in the air'. Palmerston once said that only three people had ever understood the problem, and of these one (the Prince Consort) was dead, the second was mad, the third (himself) had forgotten the solution. The Duchies had belonged to the Danish Royal Family, though not annexed to its Crown, for four hundred years. A German Grand-Duke had claims on both and had renounced them for hard cash; his son, having spent the

¹ No doubt the insurgent Poles had no more spared Russian partisans than 'Christians' spare Mohammedans in Turkey.

² *Beaconsfield*, iv. 341.

cash, naturally reasserted the claims. Bismarck saw that he could make this man, and the rights of the German Confederation (of which the Grand-Duke was a member), stalking-horses behind which Prussia could creep up and seize the two Duchies with the valuable port of Kiel. Acting in the name of 'Germany' he could draw Austria in with him as fellow robber. In Holstein there was little to be said for Denmark, for its people were German and had been considerably misgoverned by the Danes. But Slesvik was purely Danish, and had been Danish down to the River Eider since the eleventh century. The Danish kings themselves were, owing to constant German marriages, far more Teuton than Scandinavian.¹ The obvious solution, then, was to let Holstein lapse to the German Confederation and Slesvik remain to the Danish Crown. To this Palmerston would have agreed. But he had completely failed to gauge Bismarck, and he rather ostentatiously made light of German feeling. He thought he could 'bluff' Prussia by merely saying 'hands off', for he still thought of her as the timid helpless creature of the years 1840-56. Even after the tragic *dénouement* he said, in his last letter on foreign affairs, that the two Duchies had better go to Prussia than become another small German State.²

But he also showed worse than blindness. He allowed the Danes to think we should help them. His words, spoken in the House on July 23, 1863, 'those who make any attempt to overthrow the independence of Denmark will find that it

¹ Häusser (*Deutsche Geschichte vom Tode Friedrichs des Grossen*, i. 11, 12) says that it was a misfortune for the old *Reich*, that in the eighteenth century 'six of its princes wore foreign crowns'. It was certainly a misfortune for Europe. The Reformation had made it difficult for Protestant princes to marry Catholics, and all Protestant European royalties had now deep family roots in Germany, where the supply of male and female princes was inexhaustible, and would continue to be so as long as royalties clung to their snobbery.

² 'Prussia is too weak ever to be independent or honest, and, with a view to the future, it is desirable that Germany should be strong, in order to control the ambitious and aggressive powers of France and Russia.' (Sept. 13, 1865, Ashley, ii. 270.)

is not Denmark alone with whom they will have to deal', could mean nothing else. Yet 'when the pace of events changed from the old German jog-trot to that of an express train',¹ and Prussian and Austrian troops rapidly overran not only Holstein (which the Danes, trusting to Palmerston's words, had evacuated) but Slesvik also, and when, February 1864, they actually burst into Jutland, the British Government decided to do nothing at all. Queen Victoria counted for much in this decision. The Prince Consort had died at the end of 1861. He had enthusiastically wished the union of all Germany under Prussia. It was a strange, almost a unique, attitude for a German prince. But his lightest word was law to his disconsolate and very determined widow.² The Queen herein showed herself quite indifferent to the feelings of her subjects, who were eager to help the Danes, and even to those of the beautiful Danish bride whom the Prince of Wales had married in March 1863. Napoleon, however, also counted for something, though by repulsion rather than attraction. He had proposed that we should send a fleet to the Baltic while he would send troops to the Rhine, and, when we refused to join him, he fell back on a 'Conference', which met, effected nothing, and dispersed in June 1864. Palmerston not unreasonably feared that a France victorious over Prussia would seize the line of the Rhine, and thereafter, perhaps, Belgium. Yet the whole story was one of pitiful weakness on the part of our Government; and so, as the nursery song went, 'poor doggy Denmark' was left 'with never a bone', and Prussia got the port of Kiel, could make a canal from it to the North Sea, and could become a naval power when it pleased her. Malmesbury in the Lords carried a vote of censure against the Government on the Danish muddle, and in the Commons something of the same kind was only lost by eighteen votes.

¹ Delane, Nov. 26, 1863, *Life*, ii. 79.

² 'The Queen spoke of it with intense earnestness, and said she considered it a legacy from him . . . whenever she quotes an opinion of the Prince she looks upon the question as completely shut up for herself and all the world.' (*Gladstone*, ii. 102, 105.)

Henceforward for a long period Great Britain stood without an ally in the world; and, if some will say (and it is far from being an untenable view) that isolation would keep us out of foreign politics, and therefore out of possible wars, the answer must be that a patriotic English statesman should also be a 'good European'. It would not be easy to give the last title to any of our political leaders during the next fifteen years except to Lord Robert Cecil, soon to be Lord Cranborne (1865) and then (1868) Marquis of Salisbury.

Palmerston's last months were enlivened by the first vapourings of the Fenian Brotherhood.¹ This was a more or less open Secret Society, which wished to establish an Irish Republic. Its head-quarters were in Paris, and its leaders were either former 'men of 1848', or disbanded Irish-American soldiers who had fought, or at least put on uniform,² during the recent Civil War. In 1866 twelve hundred of them raided Canada and were driven in headlong flight by a few Canadian militiamen: next year (Feb. 1867) others tried to seize Chester Castle: others tried in the autumn to blow up Clerkenwell prison and killed a few people in the street. One or two of these murderers were caught, hanged, and at once written down in the Irish calendar of martyrs. Their Church would have nothing to say to them, and even denounced them vigorously, though for the last time. Yet they had grasped the two principles which were to lead their successors to ultimate victory—sporadic and sudden murder of loyalists, and a crusade against landlords. They also tried to seduce British soldiers; this was a fixed idea of Irish rebels from Wolfe Tone to Roger Casement, but a singularly unlucky one for the seducers.

In July 1865 occurred the resignation of the Chancellor, Richard Bethell, Lord Westbury, who had taken the Great Seal on Campbell's death in 1861. His was the most biting

¹ The etymology of the name is Irish and therefore misty.

² They had given Lincoln trouble by rioting against conscription, and the result was that they now got no sympathy from his successor. The first 'Fenian Convention' was held at Chicago, Nov. 25, 1863.

tongue, his perhaps the most piercing intellect, that a generation rich in great lawyers had known.¹ He had done a great deal for the simplification of procedure, had reformed the Law of Bankruptcy, had almost abolished imprisonment for debt.² He never ceased to work for a complete revision of the Statute-Book, for the compilation of a Digest of the Laws of England. But he was inhuman to the last degree; Chancellors, Prime Ministers, and Bishops had alike trembled when he spoke. He had recently allowed a scapegrace son to misuse his patronage, and he was now obliged to move for the appointment of a Committee to inquire into the circumstances of two of his own appointments. The Committee absolved him from all improper motives but found that corruption was going on in his *entourage*. 'His offence was the offence of Eli and he was called upon to pay the penalty.'³

A General Election, immediately after this scandal, again gave Palmerston, probably because of the great prosperity of the country, a large majority. It was then that Gladstone was rejected by Oxford University and came in for South Lancashire. He said, or it was said for him, that he was 'unmuzzled' at last. He had already in 1864 frightened moderate men by declaring his opinion (on the Reform Question) that every one not disqualified by 'personal unfitness or political danger' had a 'moral right' to a vote. Politics had always been to him a moral question, but hitherto he had allowed expediency to temper the heat of his very peculiar conscience. Now expediency would be cast to the winds, except in so far as it could help him to attain and keep power. His rival was busy winning over the Queen, and sparing her no flattery in the process. The aged Premier did not live to meet the new Parliament; he died

¹ Gladstone, however, said that, in the Cabinet, he was the least efficient of the six Chancellors with whom he had served, and it is perhaps true. Gladstone was not interested in legal science, and Westbury shone more as a jurist than as a statesman or a judge.

² He had reduced it to a maximum period of twelve months, to be imposed at the discretion of the Court.

³ Atlay, *Victorian Chancellors*, ii. 274.

in October in his 81st year, and John Russell (Earl Russell since 1861) succeeded him in his own 74th. The Cabinet was little altered, but two useful recruits were brought into minor office, Mr. Goschen and Lord Hartington.

In a 'Palmerstonian' Parliament few people, except Bright, Gladstone, and the new Prime Minister, were interested in Reform, and the leader against the Bill, which was introduced in the session of 1866, was not so much Disraeli as the Liberal, Robert Lowe, who had spent his early manhood in Australia and made acquaintance with democracy at close quarters. Lowe got together a miscellaneous following of malcontents, to which a witty quotation of Bright's from 1 Sam. xxii gave the name of 'The Cave of Adullam'. Lowe's speeches, however, of this and the next year were so wise and weighty, so prophetic, that they might be read with advantage to-day; yet even Lowe hardly showed as clearly as Lord Cranborne how the very weakness of our Executive, in the face of a Legislature of such colossal strength as our Parliament, made it necessary that members of that Legislature should be of high character and fair intelligence: 'a Government that must yield to the slightest wish of the House of Commons is only possible so long as that House is the organ of an educated minority.'¹ Tories and 'Cave-men' wrecked the Bill, and Russell resigned at the end of June. For the third time in fourteen years a Conservative Government took office without a majority; they might have had one if the Cave-men would have joined them.

Disraeli went back to the Exchequer, Walpole to the Home Office, Derby to the Treasury; Derby's son Stanley took the Foreign Office, Carnarvon the Colonies, and Cranborne, in spite of his dread of Disraeli, the India Office. And now the scene was somewhat suddenly changed outside as well as inside the House. For the word 'Reform' had lately been tossed about among the 'People', especially by Bright, a matchless orator, utterly sincere, and wearing ever in his heart mourning for Cobden who had died in 1865. The

¹ *Salisbury*, i. 139.

prosperity of '65 had been suddenly eclipsed by a bad panic in the City in May '66. Unemployment followed, and led hungry men to listen, as they had not listened since 1842, to speeches about their 'rights'. Bad trade fertilizes the soil for bad politics. The new Government was hardly formed when a Reform meeting, *alias* a mob, finding the gates of Hyde Park closed, tore up the railings and rushed in (July 23, 1866), crying out for the ballot and universal suffrage. *Apparent dirae facies*, not by any means of gods.¹ We now begin to hear the evil word 'campaign' applied to political agitation. Gladstone was one day to outdo even Bright as a 'campaigner'.

What would the Government do? Little remains in print to tell us of the steps of Disraeli's own 'conversion', and the arguments in favour of conversion which he and Derby exchanged are not exhilarating to read. Quite possibly Derby was the first to move. At some date at the end of the old, or at the beginning of the new year, these two decided to 'vindicate the right of their party' (oh what a pretty phrase!) to take up the question of Reform. Lady Gwendolen Cecil, in her father's *Life*, occasionally pleads for Disraeli as if he were an irresponsible child. He was 'feather-headed'. 'His permanent opinions arose in his imagination, not in his reason.' 'He saw visions, he did not draw conclusions.'² None of this can palliate the dishonesty of Derby and himself in 1867. They were going to knock Gladstone off the horse *Reform* and ride in winners on it. Unfortunately Gladstone scrambled up behind them, reached out over their shoulders, and clutched the bridle from their hands. Their change of front was indeed a shameless trick for those who had vituperated Peel in 1846. They only failed to wreck their party, as Peel had wrecked his in that year, because their party had lost courage. They sacrificed the best man

¹ A correspondent of Delane's, writing from Paris during the Commune, April 9, 1871, compares the horrible types of humanity he then saw to those who overspread London at the riots of 1866. (Dasent's *Delane*, ii. 283.)

² *Salisbury*, i. 216 and *passim*.

in it, Cranborne, and two more Cabinet ministers, and they lost for the Conservative cause every one who clung seriously to the principle of a balance in the Constitution.¹

The principle of their Bill, if we can use such a word in such a connexion, was to lower the franchise in the boroughs, but (wisely) to add a great number of 'fancy franchises', dual votes, and other safeguards. The history of the Bill was that, between its introduction in March and its passing in July, these safeguards were, at the dictation of Gladstone, abandoned one by one, and this in spite of the fact that Gladstone, in his anxiety to turn out the Government as well as to wreck their Bill, played his cards very badly, and increased, by his violent language, the distrust with which all wise men now regarded him. The result of the Bill was to lower the county franchise from £10 to £5 on freehold, copyhold, and long-leasehold estates; and in the boroughs to give a vote to every householder of 12 months' standing, either as owner or occupier, who paid poor-rates.² This added a million (chiefly uneducated) electors to the roll. Many comments and criticisms on the action of the Cabinet have been handed down. Cranborne said 'it was a political betrayal without parallel in our annals'; he flayed the party who swallowed it no less bare than the ministers who passed it, and he indicated, with terrible prescience, the sort of men who would henceforth too often find seats

¹ J. S. Mill's address to his Westminster constituents at the Election of 1865 is worth remembering. He was for universal suffrage, for both sexes, of those who could read and write, but also for a strong representation of minorities. No one class should swamp the rest of the nation; the working-class, being the most numerous, should have one-half, but not more, of the votes. Mill spoke most ably in the House to the same effect. It was at the next (Nov. 1868) Election that Miss Becher claimed a vote, and the Court of Common Pleas held that 'the term *man* does not include *woman*'. Yet *homo natura Italiam* is good Latin.

² The Act defines a dwelling-house to include any part of a house occupied as a separate dwelling, if separately rated to the relief of the poor. See Anson, *Law and Custom of the Constitution*, ed. 1909, i. 106, 113.

in the House.¹ General Peel, another resigner, a younger son of Sir Robert, said that 'nothing was so elastic as the conscience of a Cabinet Minister'. It was Derby himself who, frivolous as ever in his 69th year, said 'Yes, but don't you see how it has dished the Whigs?'—*νήπιος* who failed to realize that there would soon be no Whigs left, only undishable Radicals. To the same man, as well as to Disraeli, the words 'a leap in the dark' have been ascribed. Lowe called it 'a miserable auction in which the Country was put up for sale'. Finally let us hear Lord Morley's incisive words, written long afterwards:² 'It was carried in a Parliament elected to support Palmerston, by a Government in a minority, by a minister and a leader of the Opposition, neither of whom had the full confidence of his party, by a House of Commons which had the year before rejected a Bill to add 400,000 electors, while this Bill added almost a million.'

A lurid light was thrown on the future electorate by the discovery in this very year, 1867, of the long continuance of a series of horrible outrages perpetrated by the leaders of certain Trade Unions in Sheffield³ and other northern cities. These comprised not only the stealing of tools and other persecutions of honest workmen who refused to join the Unions, but also murders perpetrated (and paid for out of Union funds) by order of at least one of the leaders, called Broadhead. Such things had been done before, and will probably be done again, so long as these irresponsible bodies are allowed to dictate the terms on which alone men may work.⁴ A Special Commission was appointed to investigate

¹ 'Men who have suddenly acquired immense riches by some lucky stroke of speculation, and have given no guarantee in their past lives that they would be useful or honourable members of it.' (*Salisbury*, i. 271.)

² *Gladstone*, ii. 226.

³ These had begun in 1859, when the Sheffield saw-grinders tried to blow up the house of one Linley who was hostile to their Union.

⁴ Mr. Saintsbury (*A Scrap Book*, 1922, 92 sqq.) calls Trade Unions 'The Modern Grendel . . . if England does not smash them they will smash England'. It is horribly true.

the matter, but failed to get any one hanged, and the Sheffield saw-grinders refused to expel Broadhead from their Union, even after his own confession.

Before the Reform Bill came on, i. e. at the beginning of 1867, Lord Carnarvon (who resigned on that Bill with Cranborne) carried his 'permissive' measure for the Federation of the several provinces of British North America.¹ This was in reality the coping-stone to Durham's scheme of 1838-40. It is to be regretted that Newfoundland elected to remain outside the scheme, to which each continental province gradually came in. All the prophecies, then so common, that Canada would one day be absorbed by the United States, were relegated to limbo by Carnarvon's Bill.

The whole summer of '67 was marked by fresh causes of anxiety abroad. In 1866 Bismarck had carried out Part II of his programme; he had turned on the Austrians, who had helped him to get Slesvik, had adroitly picked a quarrel with them, had got the alliance of Italy by promising her Venetia, and had beaten Austria at Sadowa just at the time (July) at which Derby took office. Napoleon, whose own position would soon be that of Ulysses in the cave of Polyphemus, allowed himself to be deluded by Bismarck's vague talk about 'the Rhine and perhaps Belgium' as a reward for French neutrality. There was little sympathy in England either for Austrians or Prussians in the 'Seven Weeks' War', but when several North German States, which had sided, or wished to side, with Austria (including Hanover and Hesse-Cassel), were bolted whole by the victorious Prussians, and when Saxony only just escaped a like fate, people began to

¹ i. e. Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, with a total population of about $3\frac{1}{2}$ millions. The Red River district was admitted in 1870 and was called Manitoba, with a capital at Winnipeg; Prince Edward Island came in in 1873, and in 1905 the so-called 'Prairie Lands' became the provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan. It is railways, and they alone, that have made possible anything like a united Canada, and in fact British Columbia made her own accession to the Federation in 1871 conditional on a transcontinental railway being completed within ten years (it was opened in 1885).

rub their eyes. Napoleon, whose army and pay-chest had been swallowed up amid the cactuses and pythons of Mexico, got nothing except the withdrawal of a Prussian garrison from the fortress of Luxemburg, and the neutralization of that Duchy, after a Conference held in London in May 1867.¹ Derby was not blind to what was happening, but his son Stanley upheld the doctrine of absolute non-intervention for Great Britain. As for Disraeli, his occasional excursions into foreign politics had as yet shown little intelligence.

At the end of 1867 we had a necessary and perfectly successful war in North-East Africa, to punish a very gory tyrant called Theodore, King of Abyssinia, who had caught and ill-treated a lot of European prisoners. We sought nothing, and got nothing, out of it, and paid eight or nine millions for it. The same period saw the first approach of the trouble with America over the 'Alabama Claims', of which more hereafter; Stanley was handling it well.

Derby resigned early in 1868, and Disraeli could at least be called First Lord of the Treasury for a few months. But he was as much muzzled as his opponent was unmuzzled. He had power neither in Parliament nor in the country, as the Election of that autumn, the first held with the extended electorate, was to prove. That he ever managed to get back to office, to hold office, and to hold it with distinction, in his last six years, must be ascribed mainly to the intractable Gladstonianism of Gladstone when he too was for the first time unfettered, 1869-74. Though Malmesbury was nominal leader in the Lords in 1868, the one strong man the Conservatives had there was Cairns, now Lord Chancellor, and Cairns was an Ulster Protestant. A Lord Chancellor who, after his elevation, continued regularly to teach Sunday-School was startling, yet Cairns was as wise in the Cabinet as he was great on the woolsack.

The position of the so-called 'Irish Church', i. e. the English Protestant Church in Ireland, about one-seventh of

¹ It was this neutrality that Bismarck's pupils began by violating in 1914.

whose inhabitants belonged to it, had several times been mentioned in recent years, but more often by Bright and the English Dissenters than by Irish Catholics. In 1866 Gladstone had voted that it did not 'call for the early attention of the Government'. His 'conversion' came in 1867, and at the end of that year, in a speech outside the House, he produced a programme for wholesale dealing with Irish grievances. Both Russell and Disraeli were now ready for a large endowment of the Catholic Church, a scheme which every wise man since Pitt's days had favoured. This was also the plan of the very able Chief Secretary for Ireland, Lord Mayo, who knew more about his countrymen than the two British parties put together. Disraeli indeed had long ago grasped that it was the land, and the land only, for which the Irish middle and lower classes really cared,¹ but he was powerless to face the music that Gladstone made when, in March and April 1868, he carried in the Commons, in the teeth of the Government, a series of resolutions for 'dealing with' the anomaly of the Irish Church. Gladstone would listen to no compromise, allow no concurrent endowment; like Pym in 1642 he was for 'root and branch'. Indefensible as, by any rhyme or reason, the Irish Church was, and strange as it seems to us to-day that a large body of English opinion considered its disendowment to be 'sacrilege',² far-seeing persons prophesied that there would be but one end to such attacks, the expropriation, in the name of religion, of all the property and all the intelligence of Ireland. Such persons also knew that Gladstone was being driven to the attack, against his own deepest convictions, by the malice of Dissenters and Radicals in Britain. It is probable that he really believed that he was about to commit sacrilege. The Lords threw out his proposals by nearly two to one. Disraeli's efforts to whip up the Church in England for the defence of her Irish sister were unsuccessful; his choice of a whip, 'Sly

¹ *Vid. supr.* p. 186.

² 'It is vain and heathenish', said the wisest among the Bishops, Thirlwall of St. Davids, in 1869, 'to speak of Church property as "divine".'

Sam of Oxford',¹ was a strange one, seeing that he was just telling the Queen² that Samuel was 'absolutely in this country more odious than Laud'. And Samuel, in his rage and fury at not getting Canterbury on the death of Archbishop Longley, flung himself into the arms of Gladstone, who soon made him Bishop of Winchester.³ Disraeli even failed to get Lord Shaftesbury's assistance; Shaftesbury, like Sir Edmund Verney, had small reverence for bishops, even for those of his own nomination.⁴ But, much to Gladstone's wrath, Disraeli, with the Queen's approval, had refused to resign when beaten in the spring of 1868; he preferred to dissolve Parliament at the end of the session.

The General Election in the early winter of that year gave the Liberals and Radicals a majority of a hundred and twelve, and this spelt a blank cheque for Gladstone. At this Election, the last held under the system of open voting, the writer, then a small schoolboy, saw, in a shop window in a very corrupt borough, a placard, 'Election Eggs, forty for a shilling'.

¹ So Greville (vi. 114) once, not inaptly, called this bishop.

² *Beaconsfield*, v. 63.

³ Short space was left to Samuel wherein to trouble Israel further; he was killed by a fall from his horse in 1873. His most terrible critic, Lord Westbury, died on the same day (19 July).

⁴ It was said that Palmerston had generally allowed his step-son-in-law to nominate bishops for him.

CHAPTER IX

HOME POLITICS, 1868-80

'SWIMMING for his life a man does not see much of the country through which the river winds, and I probably know little of these years through which I busily work and live.'¹ Apart from the poverty of the metaphor, this entry in Mr. Gladstone's Diary at the end of 1868 is self-condemnatory, for a statesman should 'view the landskip o'er' from a height, considerable enough to allow him to look both into the past and into the future, yet not so great as to hide what is passing at his feet. From the very beginning the new Prime Minister's vision failed in all three directions. He was sixty, yet his amazing physical vitality had outlived such sense of proportion as his mind had ever possessed. He may often 'look aged, worn, anxious, and talk of retiring' (February 1873),² he may frequently 'take to his bed for short periods'; yet in August 1873 he walks thirty-three miles, alone, in the Highlands; in the first terrible weeks of the Franco-German War he publishes his charming, if not very scholarly, Homeric study, *Juventus Mundi* (August 1870); hardly is he out of office before he flings himself, not as a mere *πάρεργον* but as a matter of vital importance, into the hullabaloo of the Pope's Vatican Decrees, and writes vast pamphlets on the same.³ At the end of his Ministry, after a year of defeat and discouragement, which even Lord Morley calls 'an unedifying close',⁴ he is ready to propose, on a public platform, as a bribe to the electors, whom he feels to be deserting him, 'something large, strong, and telling in the way of finance', including the abolition of the income-tax! In fact he was ready to

¹ Gladstone, ii. 256.

² Ibid., ii. 438.

³ *The Vatican Decrees in their bearing on Civil Allegiance*, Nov. 1874.

⁴ Gladstone, ii. 457.

tackle any subject, to propose anything, to swallow anything, including any quantity of his own words (and he had used a great many words during the past forty years), to sacrifice any number of his own once-cherished convictions, if he could only remain in power. Worst of all, he persuaded himself that he had a mandate from on high to remain in power.

Gladstone's victory of 1868 had been won, not by Whig votes, but by those of Radicals and Nonconformists. His Cabinet hardly expressed this fact. The only real Radical in it was John Bright, and he, constantly in ill health, retired in 1871, and when he came back for a few months in 1873 brought rather a sword than peace.¹ William Edward Forster, author of one of the best measures of this Government, was of Radical complexion, but was not in the Cabinet till 1870. He was a fine tough fellow who fought hard for the best he could get, with too little help from his Chief. The rest of the Ministry was Whiggish if not pure Whig. The *mitis sapientia* of Clarendon, at the Foreign Office, might have averted many evils, but Clarendon died in June 1870, and his successor Granville was always below his work. A mirror of courtesy, and earning therefrom the sweet name of 'Pussy', Granville forgot that the most courteous of the Elder Gods has a will of his own and, on occasions, claws. Chichester Fortescue, as Irish Secretary, was good and had a real grasp of the Land question, but he was constantly overridden by his Chief, and in 1871 Lord Hartington, an honourable Whig with no special aptitude for the job, took his place. Bruce as Home Secretary, Childers (till 1871) at the Admiralty, lacked all distinction. Goschen, first at the Poor-Law Board, and then (1871) at the Admiralty, had yet to prove himself. Sir Roundell Palmer, the party's best lawyer, was kept from his woollack

¹ A later generation, indebted to Bright for his brave stand against Home-Rule in 1885, has forgotten the vindictive hatred of our older institutions which marred an intellect of great power and a character in some respects singularly pure and beautiful. In the sixties 'three groans for Mr. Bright' was a common sequel to 'three cheers for the Queen'.

for three years by his scruples about the disendowment of the Irish Church, and Sir William Page-Wood (Lord Hatherley) acted as stop-gap till 1872; Palmer then succeeded him as Lord Selborne, and proved himself, both as Judge and Law Reformer, little inferior to Cairns. The Duke of Argyll at the India Office was the one thick-and-thin supporter on whom Gladstone could always count. As Chancellor of the Exchequer Robert Lowe had splendid opportunities, of which he made little use. The one perfectly successful administrator was Cardwell at the War Office.

This should not have been a kittle team to drive. Many of them, when it was all over, spoke of Gladstone's patience towards them. Lowe, who disagreed with him oftener than the rest, said that he had for his Chief 'the feeling of a dog for his master'. Yet in one of the last scenes described by Lord Morley (February 17, 1874), the Premier gave them a fearful rating all round for quarrels and disloyalty during the last three years.¹ 'You are hardly ever absent from the House', writes Granville to him in July 1870, 'without some screw getting loose.' The whole thing really rested on the shoulders of one man, elevated to a position to which he was unequal, and refusing to realize his inequality to it. In 1871, out of one hundred and thirty Bills introduced, only one survived to be passed in its original shape.²

It cannot be said that any vigour, skill, or union, in the Opposition was the cause of this failure. The Upper House, indeed, threw out some Bills, altered and postponed others, and this was enough to lash Bright into a cry of 'down with the Lords'. But Gladstone was not ready for that, and set himself, often with courage as well as patience, to calm the Radical leader. And the Lords always gave way in the long run. The best measure of the Government, the Education Act, was actually passed by Opposition help. At least till 1872 that party was ill at ease, hating the leadership of Disraeli, whose glittering extravaganza, *Lothair* (published in 1870), did him no good with sober critics. Many sound

¹ *Gladstone*, ii. 497.

² *Beaconsfield*, v. 140.

Tories would have liked to see Derby the younger (the elder died late in 1869) take his place. Lord Salisbury continued to flay Disraeli in the *Quarterly Review*, though the latter calmly predicted¹ 'if we show strength in Parliament and country it is probable that in due time he will join us'. 'But', said the grumblers, 'that is just what we don't do.' They did not know that their leader, while he sat silent with folded arms, was manipulating the constituencies by an elaborate system which, when it was afterwards copied by the Liberals, he had the face to call by its right name, an American caucus. Meanwhile he waited and watched the busy Ministers, as a fox watches a colony of rabbits at play.

Nor can the most hardened Tory say that all of the measures passed by this Government were in themselves bad. Let us look first at some of the smaller ones. Abolition of imprisonment for debt was an unmixed blessing (1869). In the same year Trade-Union funds got legal protection against misuse by their Treasurers, and in 1871 'picketing' was, still more rightly, made a criminal offence. Lowe simplified the system of tax-collecting (1869-70). Clergymen were allowed to divest themselves of their orders (1870). The halfpenny post-card, the halfpenny post for printed matter, the introduction of open competition for the Home Civil Service (1870),² the institution of Bank Holidays, the abolition of religious tests at the two Universities—what reasonable person can plead against these? The creation of the Local Government Board, intended to keep some check upon the misuse of rates by Local Authorities (1871), was certainly a step in the right direction.

But the real triumph of the Government was the beginning, and almost the completion, of a new machinery for the administration of the Law. Lord Selborne's Judicature Act, passed in 1873, Lord Cairns's Judicature Act, 1875, and his

¹ *Ibid.*, v. III.

² The Indian Civil Service had been thrown open to competition seventeen years before, and its opening was, perhaps, of more doubtful utility.

Appellate Jurisdiction Act, 1876, are really all of one piece, and were the result of labours commenced in Cairns's first Chancellorship in 1867. They resulted in a horizontal division of our Law Courts into a High Court of Justice (itself now arranged in a King's Bench Division, a Chancery Division, a Probate-Divorce-and-Admiralty Division);¹ a Court of Appeal, now consisting of six Lords Justices of Appeal; and, finally, the Supreme Appellate Court of the House of Lords, which for this purpose is strengthened by six Life-peers. Further, the old distinction between Law and Equity was now abolished, and where the rules of the two conflicted the rules of Equity were to prevail. Appeals from the Irish and Scottish Law Courts were to lie, as before, directly to the House of Lords. The Judicial Committee of the Privy Council remained, as before, supreme in Appeals from Ecclesiastical and Colonial Courts. Henceforward to 'get into Chancery', so far from spelling ruin, as it did in the novels of Charles Dickens, was the best thing that could happen to many properties and persons, especially to those victims of their own good nature called executors and trustees.

The grant of Responsible Government to Cape Colony was perhaps hastily passed (1871), and no doubt increased the power of the Dutch, as against the British, element in South Africa, but the ensuing troubles in that country were probably more due to Lord Carnarvon's still more hasty scheme of Federation in the next Ministry. Of the smaller Government measures the worst was the Naturalization Act of 1870, which repealed all disabilities of aliens residing in Britain and allowed them full citizenship by the mere certificate of a Secretary of State. Not merely the political refugee, who 'left his country for his country's good', but the squalid proletariat of Eastern Europe, the potential 'enemy-alien'

¹ This did not take place all at once; for some years Common Pleas and Exchequer Divisions remained. In April 1869 we have the first mention of a site to be selected for the new Law Courts. The present Law Courts, designed by Mr. Street, were formally opened by the Queen in 1882 and were first used in January 1883.

and the German Jew, were now encouraged to flock to ours for our ill.

Finally, if neither the composition of the Cabinet, the temper of the Opposition, nor the less exciting measures passed, contributed anything to discredit a Government, which by its majority should have been the strongest since that of 1832, its failure was certainly not due to the 'nature of the times'. The stars in their courses were going to fight against Disraeli from 1874 onwards; they actually fought for Gladstone from 1869. It was a period of prosperity as great as that of Palmerston's last years. The opening of the Suez Canal¹ in 1869 stimulated every branch of our commerce. The temporary ruin of France made us, alas, only too conscious of our own buzzing hives of industry. Rich harvests were reaped year after year, and the shadow of agricultural depression had hardly begun to move on to the screen. We still produced nearly half our food at home, and in our madness we threw away the shilling tax on the quarter of corn which Peel had retained; it brought in nearly a million to the Exchequer, and hardly affected the price of bread at all. The National Debt was being steadily paid off, though not half as fast as it might have been,² if the Government had boldly taxed the rich inheritors of their fathers' toil. But, no; this would have lost votes—what did Gladstone care about the future?

The more famous measures of the Government must now be considered, and first of these came the disestablishment, and partial disendowment, of the Irish Church. The evil, but unavowed, basis on which the Government rested became apparent in the debates which began in March 1869. For to all the Radical Nonconformists this Bill was to be a prelude to a similar overturn of the Churches of England and Scotland. Gladstone never acknowledged this to himself, and

¹ M. de Lesseps, the promoter of the Canal, had explained his project at a Mansion House Meeting in June 1857. It was unfavourably received, and Palmerston spoke against it in Parliament.

² Only about thirty millions were paid off in these five very prosperous years.

his wilful blindness must be attributed to his intellectual dishonesty. Again, and for the last time, a chance was given of a concurrent endowment of the Catholic Church. With this all still loyal Irish Catholics would have been satisfied. In so poor a country in which 'cold money' is so highly appreciated, the nine millions of capital value which the Protestants were to forfeit would have afforded a welcome addition to the slender stipends of the Catholic priests and bishops. An amendment in this direction was suggested in the Lords, but was hardly considered in the Cabinet, in spite of the opinion of the only expert, Fortescue, who wanted at least to provide the priests with houses and gardens, and to retain Peel's annual grant to Maynooth College. Trifling as it was, that grant was also abolished, together with King William III's *Regium Donum* to the Ulster Presbyterians. Just over half the capital property of the Protestant Church was left to it (say, ten millions), and the remainder was set aside for the 'relief of distress and for charitable purposes', perhaps as an anti-famine fund. The four Irish bishops ceased to sit by turns in the Lords, and the Church of Ireland, a name which its members continue to give it, became a self-governing corporation. The worst feature in the debates was the strong language used in the Commons against the Lords' amendments, nearly all of which had to be dropped. Even Gladstone was guilty of some of this. Yet we cannot deny to a man, who was here sacrificing some of his own dearest convictions, a genuine belief that he would pacify Ireland for ever by removing the anomaly.¹ He did believe this, and it needed the prescience of a Disraeli to foretell that all such attempts at pacification would one day end in Civil War. Old Lord Derby, long utterly broken by gout, roused himself and hurled, in his last speech in Parliament, a furious Philippic against the Bill; he died in October 1869.

¹ Mr. Gladstone may have been surprised when the Irish *People* newspaper declared that the Irish Church Bill 'came stained with the blood of the Fenian Martyrs and with the sufferings of those still in prison'.

The next measure was the Irish Land Act, passed in May 1870 almost without resistance by the Lords. It was a more complicated Act, a more difficult job. I have occasionally referred above to the 'dual ownership', which had grown up in Irish land, as being a system contrary to most English ideas of tenure. Yet not to all; our slowly-dwindling copyhold¹ and our tenancy in fee-tail are really examples of dual ownership, and, like the Irish system, are relics of semi-feudal times when no one dreamed of 'evicting' such a useful asset as a tenant. Nor in old (pre-1829) Ireland had evictions often taken place, nor had rents been raised. Godfrey O'Malley had just taken his old rents when he could get them; they were always in arrear. When by any rare chance a tenant was so un-Irish as to reclaim a bit of bog, or repair his own cottage, his nominal rent remained always the same. But nights of high play and good claret at Daly's, and a vast stable full of hunters, had long ago ruined Godfrey, and the speculator who had, perhaps before, certainly after, the passing of the Encumbered Estates Act, bought O'Malley Castle, had bought it to make it pay. He had raised the rents and thereby confiscated the few improvements made by the tenants, he had enclosed and turned into pasture large acreages of land called by courtesy arable.² And the result had been real, and comparatively new, hardship.

By the advice of Fortescue, himself a model Irish landlord, Gladstone reverted to the wise recommendation of the Devon Commission of 1844, in the teeth of which the Act of 1849 had been passed. The 'Ulster Custom' was to have the force of law in Ulster and wherever else it could be proved to have established itself as a custom; that is to say, a landlord who evicted a tenant was to pay him compensation for 'disturbance', and for any 'useful' improvements he might have made on his holding. There were also in the Act clauses promising State loans to tenants who wished, with

¹ At last to be abolished, by the Act of 1922, from Jan. 1st, 1925.

² Hard landlords had begun to do this after 1829, when the votes of the small 'freeholders' had been taken away.

consent of their landlords, to purchase their holdings outright. Gladstone did not like these clauses, but inserted them to please Bright, who hoped for the creation of a society of peasant landowners. The Act failed because, as Lord Morris¹ points out, it was far too complicated to work. The difficulty of estimating what were 'useful' improvements, what was and what was not 'custom', what was 'disturbance', afforded more room for litigation than prospect of terminating the same. The whole thing was beyond that primitive Irish arithmetic of which Hole gives us a specimen.² Also the Act 'bristled with exceptions', and with intricate clauses reflecting the tortuous Gladstonian mind. The worst feature was that its benefits could not be claimed until after eviction, nor at all when eviction was for non-payment of rent. Yet this last was by far the most frequent cause of eviction. And tenant and landlord alike were so much accustomed to arrears that neither was in the habit of reckoning whether or no the nominal rent was such that in normal times the one could afford to pay it, the other expect to receive it. When this grievance was tackled by the Act of 1881, the Rebellion, which was dignified by the name of the 'Home-Rule' Agitation, and destined to end in the Civil War of to-day, had already gone so far that all remedial legislation was henceforth vain.

No gratitude, then, came to Gladstone from Ireland. He had begun his reign by releasing some of the Fenian prisoners of 1867, and in 1870 he released some more on condition that they should go beyond the seas. They went to America, a country at that time not in the best of tempers with us, and founded Irish Republican Societies to carry on the traditions of 1798, 1848, and 1867. Meanwhile, in Ireland outrages of the familiar type began directly the Act suspending Habeas Corpus expired in 1869, and these increased in 1870. So, two months before the Land Act became Law, a 'Peace Preservation Act' had to be passed and was

¹ *Ireland, 1798-1898*, p. 214.

² 'Twice 5 is 6; the 9's in 4 you cant; so dot 3 and carry 1 and let the rest walk.' (*A Little Tour in Ireland*, p. 195.)

continued till 1873. It had in it one excellent provision, borrowed, one supposes, from that great Preserver of the Peace, William the Conqueror; as it was impossible to catch all, and still more impossible, in a country where perjury is a fine art, to convict any, of the murderers, compensation for the relatives of a murdered man was to be levied on the district in which the murder was committed. Hartington, from 1871, did his best to administer this Act with a firm hand. In 1873 the Lord-Lieutenant was authorized to 'proclaim' any particular district and to suspend the Habeas Corpus Act therein. In Dublin a 'Home-Rule' association, for breaking the Union, had been formed, and a few persons calling themselves Home-Rulers began to be returned to Parliament. The name was perhaps invented by Isaac Butt, a brilliant Ulster lawyer and pamphleteer, who had long sat in the House. Butt was, however, of lazy and weak character, and no leader either for loyal or disloyal men, and his annual Home-Rule motions were as yet mere academic exercises, productive mainly of oratory. It was not in the House but in a speech at Aberdeen (September 26, 1871) that Gladstone denounced Home-Rule in these memorable words: 'Can any rational man suppose that, at this time of day, we are going to disintegrate the great capital institutions of the Country for the purpose of making ourselves ridiculous in the sight of all mankind, and crippling any power we possess for bestowing benefits?'

Lord Morley¹ quotes a letter of 1869 from Gladstone to Bright, couched in unusually modest terms: 'I have this advantage for learning the Irish land-question, that I do not set out with the belief that I know it already.' He tried hard to learn it but never succeeded. To Lord Morris is attributed a famous answer, given to one of the Premier's sons who was laying down the law about Irish affairs: 'Young man, I tell ye there's only one man in the Queen's dominions that knows less about Ireland than yourself, and *that's your papay*.' Once only, for some three weeks, did *papay* cross St. George's Channel, 'and then his visit did not

¹ Gladstone, ii. 282.

extend beyond a very decidedly English Pale'.¹ Disraeli never crossed; he was on the point of going in 1874, but a bad fit of gout stopped him.

A very different matter from all the above was Mr. Forster's Education Act of 1870. It was a noble inauguration of a series of attempts to grapple with the most vital problem of national life. Yet so 'curst' a thing is the practice of politics under a wide suffrage, that nearly all the motive power which enabled this and later Education Acts to be passed came, not from those who desired to spread knowledge, but from those who desired to hurt the Church of England. Hitherto nearly the whole of the annual Parliamentary grant, never yet quite reaching a million a year, had been given to schools under clerical control,² and many wise champions of education, Gladstone among them, wished that this control should continue; others, not less wise, saw the danger of divorcing secular from religious instruction, yet realized that it was a hardship for the children of, say, a Quaker to be compelled to attend a school which taught the Church Catechism. Forster had several problems to face. He could not afford to 'waste' the already existing Church-controlled schools, some of which were very good, yet he rightly refused to compel Dissenters to send their children to them. He could not burden the rates, or the Imperial Exchequer, by giving grants large enough to maintain both classes of schools in every parish in England. His Bill was therefore a compromise. It was to apply to all children between the ages of five and twelve. Such of the Church (hereinafter called 'Voluntary') schools as would submit to inspection were left standing, and the Exchequer would contribute half their cost—it was this clause which angered the Dissenters beyond measure—although no pupil, even in these, was to be compelled, against his parents' wish, to attend religious instruction.

¹ *Gladstone*, ii. 571.

² There were just a few Catholic, Dissenters', and Jewish, schools which, having voluntarily accepted Government inspection, got a small share of this grant.

Side by side with these, in each district in which a majority of the rate-payers would vote for it, was to be set up a 'Board-School', i.e. a school controlled by a Board elected by the said rate-payers, and in the Board-Schools 'no religious catechism, or religious formulary which is distinctive of any particular denomination', was to be taught. These Boards had power to levy a rate, no portion of which was to be allotted to the Voluntaries, and their schools were to get the same Government grant as the Voluntaries got.

Before this Act there were two million children in England and Wales who got no schooling at all. A little more than two millions were getting instruction at schools which might or might not be efficient—and it is perhaps a large assumption that of those that submitted to Government inspection all were 'efficient'. The worst flaw in the Act (but one that subsequent Acts were to heal) was that not all the two millions hitherto starved of knowledge were at once fed; each School-Board had power to compel attendance, but was not compelled to exercise such compulsion. Forster fought gallantly for universal compulsion; if his own party had backed him up there, instead of denouncing the continuance of the Voluntary Schools, they would have done good service. But they were so eager to pull down the Church—it was the fatal legacy of 1660—that they threw him on the mercy of the Opposition, to obtain the help of which he had to abandon not only universal compulsion, but several other points on which he had set store. He got no help from Gladstone, who, during the very fierce debates, was like Lord Grey in 1832, a log on a torrent.

Marred as the Act was, and bitter as were the hatreds engendered by its passing, it was an immense boon and a splendid beginning. It pointed to a day, not far distant, when the rudiments of education would be compulsory for all (1876), free to all (1891).¹ There is no doubt a most

¹ The Board of Education was created in 1899. An Act of 1902 abolished School-Boards and put all the Elementary Schools under the Local Authorities. The gravest mistake has been the abolition of school-fees in cases where parents were able, and willing, to pay

serious argument against the whole system, as there is against the assumption by the State of many other functions which, in an ideal society, would be left to the free action of individuals. For by this system the thrifty and industrious must pay for the neglect of a primary duty by the idle and improvident. Yet, dangerous as the maxim is, here if anywhere *Salus Populi Suprema Lex*; the effect of even a minimum of education adds to the efficiency of a nation powers greater than any one has yet been able to calculate. The Battle of Waterloo was won in the playing-fields (and in the class-rooms) of our Public Schools; the Battles of Ypres were won not only there, but also in the Public Elementary Schools of Great Britain.

Gladstone took even less share in the next great measures to which his Ministry owes its fame, those for Army Reform. From the War Office and Admiralty he, unable, as ever, to rise above the narrow 'political' outlook, asked but one thing, economy; and at the end of his Ministry he was demanding a fresh reduction of the small premium then paid to ensure the safety of the country. From Childers he got a good deal of what he wanted, a reduction of work in the dockyards, of the staff in the Office, of the executive officers afloat, of the ships in commission, especially of those on foreign stations. 'All fear of France was at an end' after 1870, and Gladstone failed to realize that other enemies might arise besides the country which he so cordially disliked. Apart from his dangerous reductions (which brought him much ill will) Childers had a piece of bad luck during his tenure of the Admiralty. He had encouraged the building, in the teeth of expert advice, of a new model of ship-of-the-line, the ill-fated *Captain*, which foundered, with all hands, off Cape Finisterre in August 1870. Two other Queen's ships, *Megaera* and *Agincourt*, were lost during his rule. He resigned in 1871, Goschen took his place, and Goschen, when called upon in 1873 for further reductions, replied with an emphatic 'No'.

them. Only about 1 per cent. of English men and women are now unable to read.

Cardwell, when he took the War Office, was in the happy but unusual position of knowing something about his job. He was an early friend of Gladstone's, at Liverpool, Oxford, and in the Peelite party in the Commons.¹ He had held minor office both under Peel and Aberdeen. As Colonial Secretary to Palmerston (1864) he had fostered the idea, since so brilliantly justified, of encouraging the Colonies to begin provision for their own defence. At the War Office he now continued this plan, reducing to a minimum, or entirely withdrawing, our Colonial garrisons. The economy effected thereby won Gladstone's warm approval. Yet this was a small matter in comparison with the introduction of short service (which would mean *young* service), the creation of a Reserve, the abolition of the dual control of the Army, the abolition of purchase, the abolition of bounties on recruiting. The shortest period of enlistment before Cardwell's time was for twelve years, with the option of renewal for nine more, and the veteran private was the idol of those veteran generals who had bumbled into ultimate victory in 1854-5 by his courage and devotion. No praise, indeed, can be too high for the few veterans whose health enabled them to bear the trials of active service. We know now, however, if we never knew before, that wars are won by men between twenty and thirty. Cardwell had the cunning to keep twelve years as the nominal period, but, after three years with the colours,² a man was to be drafted to the Reserve, a concept entirely new in Britain, taken from the experience of Prussia in 1807-14. Again, before this time the Commander-in-Chief at the 'Horse Guards' was subject only to the Crown, and was constantly at loggerheads with the Secretary of State for War. Kinglake's scathing comments on this anomaly fill many pages of his sixth volume. The Horse Guards, while 'George P.' (the Duke of Cam-

¹ In 1857 Cardwell had defeated W. M. Thackeray for the city of Oxford. What strange aberration could have misled the greatest and gentlest satirist of the century to think of embarking on a political career?

² Six years if the battalion was on foreign service.

bridge) was in command, illustrated the temper of that Sergeant-major in *Punch* who 'hoped this war would soon be over so that we could get to some real soldiering'. George P. was now invited to place himself under Mr. Cardwell, and it need hardly be added that he resisted this, as he resisted nearly every one of Cardwell's reforms, with all the obstinacy but not half the intelligence of his grandfather George III.

Most tenaciously of all he resisted the abolition of the system by which Commissions were bought and sold. This did not exist in the Navy, the Artillery, or the Engineers. Elsewhere there was a regulation price for each step from Ensign to Lieutenant-Colonel (not above that rank), and, in practice, the regulation prices were far exceeded in favourite regiments. Cardwell proposed to abolish purchase, allotting seven millions to reimburse those officers who had bought their commissions and could now no longer sell them. The Lords deferred the Bill till the end of the session (1870), and were therefore much surprised when it was announced that the Queen had abolished the whole system by Royal Warrant. It was said at the time, and has often been said since, that this was a justifiable (or an unjustifiable) use of the Royal 'Prerogative'. But it was not her prerogative that Gladstone had persuaded Victoria to use; it was a power expressly conferred upon the Crown by a Statute of 1809. It was, however, a trick, and a rather unhandsome parliamentary trick, which brought some discredit to its author, for the Lords would not ultimately have refused to pass the Bill. Cardwell's reforms took time to bear fruit, but they, together with the Elementary Schools, began the transformation of the British soldier from the Duke of Wellington's 'scum of the earth' (who can forgive him the phrase?) into the splendid fellow of our own day.

In a direction exactly opposite to this worked the Ballot Act, which the Lords threw out in 1871 and passed in the next year. Cardwell began to make the soldier a responsible self-respecting person. The Ballot Act took from the voter all the responsibility which should be the sole condition of political power. The franchise, as Palmerston had said,

should be regarded as a trust, and a man who is afraid to record his vote openly is not worthy to have one. No doubt open voting led to scandalous scenes, in which election eggs and dead cats¹ played a part. It also led to much bribery, but this the ballot failed to eradicate, and better remedies could have been provided for it than the ballot; the ballot not only feeds secret and envenomed hatreds, but shields much cowardice and dishonesty. Perhaps the one possible check on our present servitude to such things would be to make all canvassing, and all election promises, open or secret, into felonies. The only pleasing result of the Act of 1872 was that, while its authors confidently expected to reap from it a lifelong lease of power, the first use that the fickle electors made of it was to bundle them out neck and crop.

In the next year, 1873, came Gladstone's third venture upon the 'dancing-bogs' of Ireland. As the Papacy steadily lost its hold on intellectual Europe, it naturally gained an even firmer grip on that island; and, just when British statesmen were for throwing open all Universities to all men irrespective of creeds, the Irish Catholic bishops determined to prevent their flocks from getting any higher education at all. Reasonable Catholics had long availed themselves, as undergraduates, of Trinity College, Dublin, which had been open to them since 1794.² They were now forbidden to do so, forbidden also to attend the 'Godless Colleges' founded by Peel. The Pope, who, poor man, had recently consoled himself for the coming loss of his last temporal possession, the City of Rome, by declaring himself to be infallible, seems to have encouraged this attitude of his Irish clergy. The devout Catholic Sir John Acton, to whom his great friend Gladstone had just given a peerage, had been, for many years past, exposing in Catholic periodicals the disastrous effects on morality of the wilful worship of ignorance which the Pope's advisers fostered.

¹ It is horrible to think that some wretches even killed cats for missiles.

² Not till Disraeli's next Government were the higher offices in the College thrown open.

Disraeli had desired in 1867 to found a Catholic University for Ireland,¹ and to leave it to govern itself. This would, perhaps, have been a fair solution of the problem, but no Ministry could have passed such a measure in the teeth of English and Scottish Protestantism. Gladstone, therefore, proposed in 1873 a fusion of all the Irish Universities and Colleges into one, to be endowed partly from the funds of Trinity itself, partly from the surplus of the disestablished Protestant Church; and, in order to attract Catholics, it was expressly provided in his Bill that neither Theology, nor Moral Science, nor even Modern History, should be taught in the new foundation. Any Professor descanting on such matters to a mixed audience was to be liable to dismissal. The Irish Catholic bishops laughed in Gladstone's face, and even the House of Commons threw out the ridiculous Bill, though only by three votes. Gladstone therefore resigned on March 11th, and the Queen sent for Disraeli.

That astute person had already been showing signs of life. He was not fond of appeals to huge audiences, and seldom presented himself before those 'monster meetings', impassioned addresses to which put new breath into his rival's nostrils. But in April 1872 he rather suddenly appeared in Manchester, the old citadel of Free-trade and Liberalism, and he took it by storm. He there compared the Ministers to a row of extinct Andean volcanoes, and there also he made the famous pun about *sanitas sanitatum*,² wisely suggesting that a due provision for the health of the People was more important than political reform. A month or two later he let the words 'Empire', 'care for imperial interests',

¹ Manning, already a Catholic Archbishop, had warmly approved of this, and had, or professed to have, won the consent of his Irish colleagues. But these astute persons perceived, in the spring of 1868, that Gladstone had something far more tempting to offer, and at once threw poor 'Dizzy' over. Manning's desertion of him was particularly base. (*Beaconsfield*, v. 5-10.)

² Grant-Duff (*Diary*, July 3, 1878) learns that the pun is not new, but is found in an old French book called *Menagiana*, a collection of *bons mots*, &c.

drop¹ on to the table—he who in his early days had railed at the Colonies as ‘burdens round the neck of Britannia’. The loss of his beloved wife in that same year had finally endeared him to the Queen, to whose sympathy no widow or widower ever appealed in vain.

‘Do not accept this resignation, Madam,’ was Disraeli’s shrewd advice in March 1873; in other words, ‘give them more rope yet, they will hang themselves all the more effectually.’ Not all his party were pleased with their leader’s decision, although he showed no less skill in quieting these than in luring on his enemy. A week later Gladstone was obliged to resume office, and to seek desperately for some startling measure in the hope of regaining popularity. ‘The board, however, was bare, the meal frugal,’² though the Premier was proposing to lower the county franchise so as to give a vote to the agricultural labourers. These, led by Joseph Arch, had recently embarked on a long industrial dispute with the farmers. Their demand that their totally inadequate wages should be raised was most justifiable, but it came at an unfortunate time, when the low price of foreign and colonial corn was on the eve of hitting the British farmer very hard indeed. In 1874 arable land was just beginning to go out of cultivation.

There were other breakers ahead of the Government. Lowe, a careless administrator, had been culpably blind to a financial mistake made by two high officials in the Post Office; though there was no suggestion of corruption, there had been very heavy unauthorized expenditure. The Home Secretary, in his ill-drawn Licensing Bill, had provoked the wrath of the public-house keepers by sending them and their customers to bed too early. Mr. Ayrton at the Board of Works, a very absurd and ill-bred person, had been riding rough-shod over several important interests. And so in September 1873 Disraeli was able to write to Lady Chesterfield ‘the firm is now insolvent and will soon be bankrupt’.³

¹ Those who have heard Lord Beaconsfield speak will perhaps understand my use of the word *drop*.

² Gladstone, ii. 475.

³ Beaconsfield, v. 258.

At the close of the session of 1873 Gladstone,¹ with characteristic courage, determined to be his own Chancellor of the Exchequer *vice* Lowe; and the tiresome little question, whether he needed, under the Act of Queen Anne, to seek re-election on taking that office, contributed to the fall of the Government. Since his rejection by South Lancashire in 1868, he had sat for Greenwich, and he may have had reason to fear that the Greenwicccians, in their turn, were ready for a change. If so he was right, for, though, when the Election came, he was second on the poll, a local gin-distiller was first. Before resigning, however, Gladstone appealed to Goschen and Cardwell for fresh economies, and it was only when he found that they would consent to no further reductions of Navy or Army that he resigned, January 24th, 1874. In his Election address he took the new and dangerous course of offering to the electorate two gigantic bribes, abolition of the income-tax and of all duty on sugar. The counter-notes struck in Disraeli's address were, 'no more showy and expensive legislation: quiet administration and some useful sanitary measures: vindication of the honour of the Country abroad: integrity of the Empire beyond seas'. The Electorate returned 350 Conservatives, 245 Liberals; but, instead of ten Home-Rulers, Ireland sent fifty-seven, who would of course vote against whatever Government was in power.

Mr. Paul² calls Disraeli's 'the Ministry of all the Opportunities'. If this implies, as it undoubtedly does, that these opportunities were wasted, the words are unfair. For Nature, as I said above, made the paths rough for Ministers' feet. There was a series of bad seasons, culminating (1879) in the wettest and coldest summer on record, and land was soon to go out of cultivation at the rate of 100,000 acres a year. The disastrous plight of agriculture was atoned for

¹ In August he was courting Welsh Nonconformity by presiding at the Eisteddfod at Mold. In his speeches there he pretended that England had bullied Wales to induce her to abandon her ancient Celtic language—a most gratuitous falsehood.

² *Modern England*, iii. 372.

by no commercial prosperity; between 1874 and 1880 our foreign trade declined by fifty millions sterling. 'The master of all the arts,' who now succeeded 'the model of all the virtues',¹ had an almost Napoleonic faith in his Star, but the 'angel whom he still served' betrayed him when he put his faith to the test. Machiavelli would have said that Disraeli failed to adapt his steps to the changing pace at which Fortune was spinning her wheel.

'Mr. Disraeli', said *The Times*,² 'shows something of the carelessness of conscious strength in not packing his Cabinet with colleagues who will always acquiesce in his decisions.' It was a small body of twelve, and the strongest man was the great Chancellor, Cairns. Lord Salisbury (India till 1878, then Foreign Office) had yet to attain his full stature. He differed badly from his Chief on Church questions (and a Church question shook the Ministry at its outset), and also mistrusted him personally. To learn with what intense reluctance her father consented to serve, and how long this mistrust lasted, we must turn to Lady Gwendolen Cecil's book. Lord Carnarvon (Colonies) was in a similar plight, and was always a cause of dissension till he resigned early in 1878. Derby at the Foreign Office (till 1878) was an able man, but was losing touch every day with the mentor of his youth. As Lord Stanley, from 1851, he had been far more friendly to Disraeli than his father had ever been, and he was more in earnest than his father. But he was always hesitating and anxious, until at last he took refuge in silence, and even suffered dispatches to 'answer themselves'. In the crisis of January to March 1878, he erected inaction into a principle, and yet hesitated to resign. He ended as an open adherent of the Opposition. Cross as Home Secretary was another good man, brave, conciliatory, and legal-minded. Gathorne Hardy (War Office, afterwards India) was a bonny fighter in debate. Hunt at the Admiralty was feeble, and was soon succeeded by W. H. Smith, one of the best of civilian First Lords. Sir Stafford Northcote at the Exchequer would have been excellent in quieter times, but, as a financier, he

¹ Ibid., iii. 374.

² Feb. 20, 1874.

had sat too much at Gladstone's feet to fight him well. When Disraeli went to the Lords in 1876 and left Northcote to lead the Commons, Northcote strove, *impar congressus*, not only against Achilles but against several of his myrmidons. If Troy could have been saved by a single right hand, Disraeli would have saved it (few Ministers have made a more gallant fight), but it was the hand of a man far through in years, in broken health, burdened by a load of not unmerited obloquy from the past, and never accustomed to draw fresh strength, as his rival drew it, from the soil or the open air of a country which, after all, was hardly his own. When he took his Earldom it was because the fight had become too hard for him. Moreover, he was the Queen's Minister before all things, and he set himself, not always by the most scrupulous means, to flatter and defer to a middle-aged widow of much experience and lofty character, but of no commanding intellect and of strong prejudices.

He might have avoided his first mistake, the Public Worship Regulation Act, but for her wish. This Act, known at first as the 'Archbishop's [Tait's] Bill', was the outcome of a Commission appointed in 1867 to report on the increase of illegal ritual in the Church of England. Its first suggestor was the strong Low Churchman, Shaftesbury. Most of the bishops would have voted for it in its original shape. Though Disraeli supported it mainly to please the Queen, he also knew that it would raise Gladstone to white heat, and that Gladstone's speeches against it would be very displeasing to his Nonconformist supporters. Of the Cabinet, Salisbury and Carnarvon spoke and voted against it, Cairns supported it warmly. Much mauled in debate, it came out far more 'Erastian' than the bishops had wished. Instead of giving an episcopal tribunal of appeal to parishioners who suffered, as many did, from the Romanizing antics of their clergymen, it set up a single lay judge with power to imprison such priests as refused either to keep within the law or resign their benefices. There were, unfortunately, plenty of devout Puseyites who welcomed such martyrdom for the pleasure of flouting bishops, law, and laymen. 'Hunger-strikes' had

not then been invented, or they would doubtless have been used. The Act was, in fact, a complete failure, and was subsequently repealed.

With less reason Gladstone denounced the other Church Bill of 1874, which abolished patronage in the Church of Scotland and thus opened a possible door of reconciliation with the Seceders of 1843. In January 1875 he nominally relinquished the lead of his party;¹ in after years he said, 'I did not formally abdicate', but this must have been a 'terminological inexactitude', for Hartington was, with Gladstone's full consent, elected in his place at that date. Abdication or none, the late Prime Minister was never very far away. He did not sit in sphinx-like silence, as Disraeli had sat from 1869 till 1872, but he lay out in the open, a little way behind his own army, like a fine old lion, lashing his great tail to and fro, and every now and then giving a terrific roar, or series of roars, which shook the political firmament.

Disraeli had come in pledged, in domestic matters, only to some series of Acts expressive of his maxim of *sanitas sanitatum*. We owe to him an Act against the pollution of rivers (1876); perhaps had it been stronger there would now be better salmon-fishing. Much more useful and effective were the Act of 1876 against the enclosure of commons, and that of 1878 which saved Epping Forest as the playground of Eastern London. There was a Prisons' Bill of 1877, transferring the control of Prisons from local to central authority. There were two Factory Acts, 1874, 1878, setting ten hours as the legal maximum of a working day; a Public Health Act of 1875; and an Employers and Workmen's Act, making breach of contract on either side merely a tort not a crime.² Better than any of these was the Artisans' Dwellings Act, 1879, empowering the local authori-

¹ The announcement was made in a letter to Lord Granville on Jan. 13th.

² 'Nothing to be a crime if done by two or more persons which would not be criminal if done by one'—a dangerous principle, for it has let in again the tyrannous practice of picketing.

ties, in towns of over 25,000 people, to purchase insanitary dwellings, at a value to be fixed by arbitration, to pull them down, and to erect sanitary houses on their sites. The Act, however, only allowed, did not compel, the said authorities to get to work; and, as they generally shrank from raising the rates, and as their members were too often themselves the owners of the worst slums in the towns, they seldom did get to work. It never seems to have occurred to any one, either then or since, to make the receipt of rent from a dwelling-house, either in town or country, which the local sanitary officer can prove to be unfit for human habitation, into a felony. Yet something of that kind is surely needed.

Another fine measure was the Merchant Shipping Act of 1876, for the principle of which Mr. Plimsoll had long been fighting with more valour than discretion. He made more than one violent 'scene' in the House, but he touched public opinion by his desperate earnestness, and at last he won his point. The Board of Trade was henceforth to inspect all merchant-ships, and to detain those that were unseaworthy or overloaded; a 'load-line' was defined, and deck-loads were forbidden in the winter months. The ship-owners, as a body, did not come very well out of the debates, though some of the adjectives and substantives that Plimsoll hurled at them were quite unjustifiable. The last important domestic Act of this Ministry was introduced in 1879 after a Scottish bank failure, which had spread ruin far and wide. An Act of 1855 had introduced the principle of 'limited liability', previously unknown. The Joint-Stock Companies Act of 1862 had compelled all Companies with more than twenty shareholders to be registered, 'either as limited or unlimited by shares, or as limited by a guarantee'. The present Act enabled Joint-Stock Companies originally of unlimited, to be re-registered with limited, liability, so that their shareholders should not be obliged to pay up, if the Company should fail, more than the full value of their shares. Banks and Insurance Companies have been the greatest gainers by this Act.¹

¹ See, on this difficult subject, Walpole, *Twenty-five Years*, ii. 164.

For the last five of Disraeli's six years, serious complications abroad, necessitating increased Naval and Military expenditure, marred Northcote's careful finance and tempted Sir Spencer Walpole into one of his few epigrams.¹ And in such circumstances every credit must be given to Northcote for his improved Sinking-fund, under which 150 millions of National Debt were paid off in twenty-five years, many of them extremely 'bad' years.

Wherever you turn you will see the gallant old Minister overmatched by bad luck. In the House itself he had to meet a new trouble in the shape of organized obstruction of debate by the Irish Home-Rulers; this was acute from 1877, though it began before that. Ireland itself was fairly quiet, and Sir Michael Hicks-Beach was a good Chief Secretary. Butt remained nominal Irish leader till '78, but young Mr. Parnell, 'the Achitophel of the House of Commons',² was contemptuously pushing Butt aside, and formally took his place in that year. If Butt had been a shadow of O'Connell, Parnell was a man of 1798 *tout pur*, cold, calculating, and unscrupulous. Biggar, a noisy Northern vulgarian, was perhaps the inventor of Parliamentary obstruction. Parnell erected it into a fine art, used it or suspended it as it pleased him. He joined or deserted English Radical groups (which often helped his obstructive tactics) also as it pleased him. Whole weeks would be wasted over some small point in the estimates. All-night sittings, with all their nerve-racking accompaniments, became common. The Liberal front-bench, when led by Hartington, honourably helped Northcote against the obstructionists, but it was little that it, or the Ministers, could do.

Parnell himself was a Protestant, a small Wicklow land-lord, but he had American rebel blood in him, and a mother and sister who had been ardent Fenians. He did not himself join any rebel association, and he professed a kind of loyalty. But he drew all his strength from rebels and from America.

¹ 'While Disraeli was raising the whirlwind, Northcote had the humbler task of raising the wind.' (Ibid., iv. 372.)

² Morris, 228.

He carried rebellion into England, when, in 1878, he founded the 'Home-Rule League of England'. His chief tool was a released Fenian, Michael Davitt, born in Mayo, bred in Lancashire. Davitt went to America, and on his return joined Parnell in founding the 'Land League', a bond or covenant to refuse payment of rent in Ireland. This League virtually ruled Ireland for many years to come. Henceforward rents, if paid at all, were paid secretly. No one dared take a farm from which a tenant had been evicted; if he did, his cattle were mutilated and he himself was 'boycotted'¹ and probably shot. The Irish peasants, naturally kindly and good-humoured, at first resented this tyranny; soon their other quality, natural cowardice, compelled them to submit to it, and they ended by embracing it, and any other defiance of law, as marks of freedom. In the art of insurrection Parnell had little to learn from any French Revolutionist. In 1879 he went to America and made a tour of its chief cities to excite hatred to England and to raise funds for his League. A threat of famine in the bitter summer of 1879 played into his hands. Few prospects can have been blacker than those of loyal Irishmen when the helm dropped from Lord Beaconsfield's hands in 1880. It hardly needed Beaconsfield's prescience to foretell that Gladstone would soon turn Home-Ruler to get the Irish vote. He carefully avoided prophesying that he would keep that vote.

Finally we must admit that, while Beaconsfield had to work under conditions infinitely more difficult than Gladstone's, some part of his failure must be put down to himself. He was even less master in his Cabinet and in the Commons than Gladstone. He was too ready to abandon, or to mutilate, particular measures in order to please particular people or interests. He was even less ready than Gladstone to face quarrels in his own party; and—I do not say it was a result of his temperament, for it was mainly the result of his own

¹ Treated like Captain Boycott, a brave land-agent, to whom this persecution was first applied; no one was allowed to deal with, or to speak to, a boycotted person.

long history—he was even less trusted than Gladstone. Always in debate, when the two faced each other, he was the victor, simply because of his calm patience and self-control; Gladstone's lack of these qualities was so manifest, that Disraeli has been compared to an experienced *matador* dealing faithfully with an angry bull in the arena. After his death, a death following closely on his resignation, Beaconsfield speedily became a legend, and, in spite of the brilliant and fascinating *Life* which has lately been completed, it is not as a man of flesh and blood, of passions, sorrows, sins, and triumphs, but as a legend and a sphinx, that he remains.

CHAPTER X

FOREIGN POLITICS, 1868-80

AMONG the causes of Gladstone's defeat in 1874 was something which may roughly be called the want of a 'spirited foreign policy'; and among those which upset his rival six years later was a foreign policy claiming to be one of great spirit, but hardly, at the time, appearing to justify the claim.

Gladstone's troubles abroad were almost all concentrated in his three central years, 1870-2, and they were due to the action of three Powers, Prussia, Russia, and the United States. Of these, Russia would hardly have moved without the encouragement of the other two. Although the American trouble was the last to be settled it will be convenient to treat of it first. Stanley and Clarendon had successively taken steps to deal with the claims put forward by America for the damage done to her commerce, during her Civil War, by the *Alabama* and by some seven other Southern vessels. These had either sailed from, or been 'received and comforted' in, British or British-Colonial ports. Every one (except John Russell) admitted that we should pay something for these escapes and escapades, and matters seemed to be going with fair smoothness when Granville succeeded Clarendon at the Foreign Office in June 1870. Perhaps it was the Russians (they had recently sold Alaska to the Americans) who stimulated the latter to increase their demands on Britain, and perhaps it was Bismarck who stimulated the stimulators. Be that as it may be, shortly after we had agreed, in May 1871, to refer the claims to an International Court of five arbitrators, to sit at Geneva, America began to put forward two new sets of demands: (i) the whole cost of the last two years of the war, (ii) the whole cost of the war. She stated—it can

hardly be said that she argued—that, but for the *Alabama* and her consorts, the war would have been over in 1863; and she went on to state that, if we had refused in 1861 to recognize the Southerners as belligerents, there would have been no war at all. Neither statement was capable of proof or of disproof. No actual sum was specified in either demand, but it was calculated, on this side, that the costs of the war might run to several hundred millions sterling. That such claims could be made, and a hint dropped that the cession of Canada would liquidate them, will give us a fair measure of 'statesmanship' as understood in America.

Disraeli himself did not denounce this insolence more fiercely or more openly than Gladstone. Yet it was meant in earnest and seriously pushed at Geneva, and it kept us on tenter-hooks for nearly eight months in 1871-2. Happily for the future peace of the world, the Court refused to entertain any 'indirect' claims at all. Meanwhile the actual damage wrought by the Confederate ships was put by America at 9½ millions. The arbitrators, though neither individually nor collectively favourable to us, found themselves obliged to divide this by three. Even the 3¼ millions awarded were probably excessive, and it has been said that the American Government had some difficulty in discovering enough injured merchants to absorb the sum when it had been paid.

Granville's public statements on the award were a little too self-congratulatory. Most Englishmen felt that none of the *Alabama* business was a matter for pride, still less for congratulation; felt, too, that the absurd insolence of the indirect claims might have been met with rather stiffer words than the Foreign Secretary had used. It was, moreover, the second snub with which he had put up. Just as the German siege of Paris was beginning, the Tsar, on October 31, 1870, shocked European opinion by declaring that he no longer held himself bound by that article of the Treaty of Paris of 1856 which prohibited him from keeping ships of war in the Black Sea. True, those who drew the Treaty had hardly expected its provisions to last for ever;

but (i) the manner of its repudiation, (ii) the moment chosen, when France, one of its chief signatories, was in her agony, were singularly unpleasing. No doubt it was a trick of Bismarck's to embroil England with Russia, and so to enable him to finish off France unmolested. Gladstone thundered in public against the Tsar's action, but he allowed Granville to answer the dispatch quite softly, and all that Granville seems to have cared about was 'saving our face'. Rather cleverly, however, Granville sent a private envoy to Bismarck (who was then at Versailles), and this envoy contrived, apparently without having been authorized to do so, to use some quiet but effective threats. Bismarck therefore suggested a Conference, and this met in London in January 1871, when France could not possibly be represented at it. Granville ought at least to have insisted that the public law of Europe should not be altered without the consent of France, and the new French Republic could have been represented if the meeting had been delayed for only two months.

On March 13th the Conference closed with a ruling wholly in favour of the violator of the law, the Tsar, who was thus set free to enter upon fresh aggressions against his old Turkish foe. He was already causing us other qualms by steadily pushing his troops through Asiatic Turkestan. Now, when the Russian declaration was first known in London (November 1870), there had been a real outburst of wrath and a good deal of warlike talk. Naturally, therefore, in the following March, people thought that the Government had not only not saved its face, but had played rather a timorous part. 'What can you expect of a Cabinet with Bright in it?' was the sort of question asked; nor was it an unreasonable one, for, when the Franco-Prussian War had begun, in the previous July, Bright had demanded a public declaration that we should remain strictly neutral, even if either combatant violated Belgium.

In considering the attitude which Britain took towards that great war it would be desirable, though it is not easy, to distinguish between 'the iridescent and rotten fabric of

Napoleon's Empire'¹ and France herself; for France, it is too true, had to pay the penalty for having tolerated that Empire for eighteen years. Ever since 1866, and perhaps earlier, Napoleon had been secretly coveting Belgium, and Bismarck had been playing cat-and-mouse with him over it. In 1867 there had nearly been an explosion over Luxemburg, but Stanley had displayed some skill, and had engineered a 'collective guarantee' of the Powers for the neutrality of that province. Yet the possibility that Bismarck and Napoleon would come to some agreement, to the prejudice of other Powers, lasted till 1870. Lord Acton has shown² that the Prussian war-party was eager to attack France long before Bismarck was, and that the latter forfeited some of his popularity by his hesitation to do this. Gladstone's Cabinet, as a whole, was quite blind to what was going on, but Clarendon had known a good deal, and had warned the Queen shortly before his own death, which happened on June 27, 1870. It was actually from the Queen that Gladstone and Granville first heard of Bismarck's dangerous schemes. Yet they never knew that these schemes finally involved the manœuvring of France into the position of aggressor, and so putting her in the wrong in the eyes of Europe.

The Spaniards, who had deposed Isabella the Improper in 1868, were on a hunt for a king, as they had been in Louis XIV's and Louis-Philippe's times; and, as the choice of a Frenchman would be provocative, they allowed the suggestion to be made to them of a Catholic prince of the family of the King of Prussia, his cousin several hundred times removed. Napoleon naturally objected to this, as Bismarck meant him to object. Then the wily Prussian lured his victim on to do more than object, namely, even when this particular candidate withdrew, to demand that Prussia should promise never again to sanction such a candidature. The Spaniards were, as cat's-paw, quite innocent, but Clarendon could probably have warned both them and

¹ Lord Morley's words in *Gladstone*, ii. 319.

² *Historical Essays*, 338.

Napoleon that the whole thing was a trap; the Emperor was not devoid of judgement, and, having few trustworthy statesmen of his own, had really trusted Clarendon. Granville, however, not only failed to see the trap, but acted as if he hardly dared to remonstrate. For five days during the second week in July, the most critical week for Europe since 1815, the British Cabinet never met at all, and not till war had been declared (July 15) did Granville mildly suggest that both Prussia and France might invoke the mediation of the other Powers. To Gladstone, no doubt, the Pope's declaration of his own infallibility, published on the 13th, was far more interesting than the fate of France or Germany. It looks, says Lord Morley,¹ as if Gladstone were more anxious about what he was to say in Parliament concerning the coming war than about the war itself.

No one can blame Bismarck for allowing the publication (*The Times* got hold of it on July 25) of Napoleon's late designs on Belgium. And no one can blame Granville for thereupon proposing to each belligerent a treaty, which each accepted, to the effect that, if either of them violated Belgian territory, Britain would join the other side in arms.² A few weeks later we formed treaties of neutrality with Austria, Denmark, and Italy. Surely, however, such neutrality might have been a little more 'armed'.³ Disraeli, who, alone and at once, saw the magnitude of the coming change in Europe, spoke strongly to the effect that the Government ought to make such reasonable preparations that it could intervene, if necessary, at any moment. He spoke to deaf ears. Whatever may be said about the prudence, and even the duty, of neutrality, whatever about the danger of interference, it was rather horrible that, when two out of the three great nations of the West were at

¹ *Gladstone*, ii. 329.

² For the rescue of Belgium only; such assistance was not to be claimed in any other theatre of the war.

³ Cardwell got Parliament to vote 20,000 more men, but this left the army 4,000 short of its 1868 figures, for 24,000 men had been disbanded in the Government's first eighteen months.

death-grips, the third should look calmly on and hug its own commercial prosperity.

There were five monitors in *Dame Europa's School*, and each owned a bit of garden. There was the 'saintly humbug' William, always being urged on by his fag, Mark, to attack Louis, who was 'fond of a shindy'. There was John, too; his garden was on an island, and he used it mainly as a workshop to make tools and things to sell to other boys. He had always been looked up to as the head boy in the school, but he was now prevented (by his fag Billy) from interfering to stop the fight between William and Louis. John didn't half like this, but went on with his work in a grumpy humour, though he 'hated playing second fiddle'. When Louis was getting a fearful licking, the good Dame came on the scene and asked 'what John was about; why hadn't he stopped the fight, which he could easily have done?' and the rest of the school told her, 'Please, Ma'am, he sucked up to both of them.' Mrs. Europa, after rating John and his fag most severely, said: 'Take care that William does not contrive (as I fully believe he will) to get a footing on the river where he can keep a boat, and then one fine morning he will take your pretty island by surprise.'¹

'The defeat of France', says another anonymous pamphleteer, in *The Battle of Dorking*,² 'was such as had never happened before in the World's history.' And the writer went on to prophesy that which might very well have happened to us at almost any time during the next forty years, if Germany, in striking for world-power, had been willing to take *all* risks.

When the French Empire fell at Sedan (Sept. 2, 1870) and a provisional Government was set up in Paris, we accorded that Government no diplomatic recognition. When M. Thiers ran round the neutral capitals of Europe to beg

¹ *The Fight in Dame Europa's School*, 1870 (anonymous, really by the Rev. H. L. Pullen), 28 pp., price 6d.

² *The Battle of Dorking, Reminiscences of a Volunteer*. Reprinted from *Blackwood's Magazine*, May 1871 (by Sir George Chesney), 64 pp., price 6d.

for help, Granville showed quite un-Granvillian firmness in refusing to listen to him. Just before the bombardment of Paris began he twice induced Bismarck to grant interviews to French suppliants, who got no comfort in that quarter. Bismarck in fact held ace, king, queen, knave, ten, and all the little trumps, and against us he needed to play only the Russian king and the American knave.¹ When the final terms were offered in February 1871 and France had to accept them, Gladstone told his friends that the tearing away of Alsace and Lorraine was both a crime and a source of future danger, but Granville, perhaps sick of vain protests, did not even protest. All this 'coldly correct' attitude, coupled with the enormous wealth we were drawing from the war, hurt the feelings of the intellectuals² in Britain, who soon saw the gross material aims underlying the vaunted German idealism. To do Gladstone justice he was quite ignorant of these feelings, and seldom went into company where they found expression. But a minister ought not to be ignorant of the opinions of the most enlightened section of his countrymen.

Fortunately for us no other serious European complication occurred during this Ministry. When in 1875, Bismarck, frightened at the rapid recovery of his late victim, was preparing for a fresh attack on her, Great Britain cordially approved the 'hands off France' which Russia growled at Germany. Yet would Disraeli, then in power, have gone to war to save France from a second attack?

Disraeli was, we know, 'a seer of visions', of great things far away. When he came to office his eyes were gazing Eastwards. He feared Russia, and he feared for India. In

¹ Lord Salisbury thought at this time that it was not Bismarck so much as the German people and army that wished for the utter humiliation of France. 'The very consideration which, to onlookers, made the transfer of Alsace and Lorraine appear so imprudent was what made it, in the eyes of the Germans, so desirable.' (*Salisbury*, ii. 36.)

² At the other end of society, sympathy with France had been made a pretext, in September 1870, for a few 'republican' demonstrations in London.

these fears he carried the nation with him, including all the sober elements of Parliamentary Liberalism. Nor were these fears groundless. Did Disraeli, then, play upon these fears in order to show that the British Lion was not the sleepy overfed beast of Gladstone's keepership? If so, was he wrong in principle? Well, he alone had divined the full meaning of the new Germany; he had even divined the advance of Japan on to the stage.¹ But he knew little about details; he was almost as ignorant of the geography of Eastern Europe and Western Asia as Mr. Lloyd George.²

He approached the 'Eastern Question' at first by indirect steps. Trouble in the Turkish Empire had long been brewing, and there is little doubt that the Russian ambassador, Ignatieff, during his twelve years' residence at the Porte, had nursed it skilfully. There had been religious massacres and counter-massacres in Syria, insurrections in Crete. The Treaty of 1856 had not given to any Power or group of Powers any mandate to make the Turk amend his ways, and meanwhile a good many European capitalists had invested money, at high interest, either in loans to the Sultan, or in commercial concerns in his dominions. They ought not to have been surprised when, in 1875, Turkey declared a partial bankruptcy. Another bankruptcy seemed imminent, that of the Suez Canal Company; the Canal was expensive to work, and, though three-fourths of the shipping that used it was British, most of the shares were held either in France or by the Khedive of Egypt, the degenerate descendant of Mehemet Ali. The Khedive, as extravagant and as helpless as his suzerain the Sultan, was preparing to sell his shares to a French syndicate. Disraeli, at the end

¹ 'Bismarck is another old Buonaparte again, and must be bridled.' (*Beaconsfield*, v. 421.) 'Japan is the Sardinia of the Mongol East.' (*Ibid.*, v. 438.)

² A document printed by Mr. Buckle (*ibid.*, vi. 102) shows Disraeli in 1876 'cramming up' the military geography of Thrace, and calculating the *étapes* of a British Campaign there. He came to the wise conclusion (so interesting to students of 1915) that, to hold the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus effectively, we must hold also the land approaches to those waters.

of 1875, resolved on the *coup* of buying them for the British Government. He probably knew that it would mean an occupation of Egypt at some not distant date, but he was so scrupulously anxious to avoid offending France (which naturally did not relish our purchase), that even in 1878, when Egypt was, so to speak, thrust at him, he refused it. He paid four millions for the shares, and forty years afterwards their value was estimated at ten times that sum.¹

Gladstone thought that the purchase meant an immediate occupation of Egypt, and, with somewhat heavy pleasantry, said, 'So he [Disraeli] may be Duke of Memphis yet' ² Disraeli had some difficulty in getting his Cabinet, especially Northcote and Derby, to consent to the purchase of the shares. The Khedive was so much pleased with his hard cash that he allowed France and England each to lend him an expert financier to help him balance his books, and thus began the 'Dual Control' of Egypt, which lasted until France withdrew of her own free will and left us practically supreme in that country. Our agent, Major Baring, afterwards Earl of Cromer, went out in 1879, and gave Egypt the first good government she has enjoyed since the fall of the Roman Empire.

In 1876 two successive Turkish Sultans were deposed within three months, and 'Abdul the Damned' entered on his long reign.

This, however, is anticipating. In coming to closer grips with the 'Question' itself, we must keep in mind the steady advance of Russia towards Afghanistan and the North-Western Gate of India; she had made the 'golden journey to Samarcand' and that to Bokhara in '68, to Khiva in '73; she was at Khokand by '75, and her next steps would

¹ 'I'm a Lancashire man and gets drunk when I can,
Sir Wilfrid * may jaw, but I shall;
Patriotic's my thirst, for the liquor accurst
Has purchased the Suez Canal.'

² Gladstone, ii. 551.

* Sir W. Lawson, a famous *Pussyfoot* of those days.

be to Merv and Herat. The Ameer of Afghanistan would probably have welcomed open British support at any time during these years, but it had long been our fixed policy to keep clear of that terrible country. The word of the venerable Lord Lawrence, who lived till 1879, was law on this subject to a strong party, both in the India Office and at Simla. Whether or no in 1876-80 we made a fearful error in reversing Lawrence's policy I do not feel competent to say. At all events the Russians were creeping on, and they drew the Ameer into their orbit. Disraeli resolved to counter this, and at first thought it could be peacefully countered by sending political agents to reside in places like Candahar and Herat; not in Cabul itself, for that was a thing the Ameer would be most unwilling to grant. Now Lord Salisbury, who knew more about space, time, geography, and the Russian army, than his Chief, was far less anxious on the subject; yet in the end he came to subscribe to his Chief's policy and bore a principal hand in the shaping of it.

By 1875 Ignatieff had spread his Balkan nets widely enough; he then sat down and began to pull their strings. Few people in Western Europe realized that the several budding 'nationalities' in the Balkan Peninsula often hated each other much worse than they hated Turks; we lumped them all together as 'oppressed Christians'. Christians they undoubtedly were by confession and ritual, but, so far as morals are concerned, their attitude to each other, and to their Mohammedan neighbours, resembled that of Salvian's fellow Christians in fifth-century Marseilles.¹ Moreover, it is by villages rather than by provinces that the two (or, since a recent Bulgarian schism, three) mutually hostile faiths are distributed in the peninsula. The high officials were all Mohammedan, the peasants themselves might be

¹ 'Hic enim loquendi usus est talibus, "Per Christum quia tollo illud", "per Christum quia occido illum" . . . id ipsum in quo Christi iniuriam faciunt dicunt se ob Christi nomen esse facturos . . . armant se ad latrocinandum per Christi nomen.' (Salvian xv, xvi, in Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, liii. 87-90.)

of either faith, and of any one out of four or five different strains of blood; each particular village, however, would be homogeneous in blood and of one faith, for 'dissenters' would be driven out or killed.

Risings against the iniquitous Pashas began in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the provinces immediately neighbour to the Austrians. Little Montenegro, Tennyson's 'rough rock-throne of freedom', was spoiling for a renewal of its five-hundred-year long fight with the Turks, and so were the somewhat less free Serbs. Russian officers (rather to the dismay of Austria) flocked to aid the insurgents, no doubt with the connivance of their Tsar. Yet it was natural that the first 'Note to the Powers' on the subject should come from Vienna, and it came at the end of 1875. The gist of it was: (1) It is time that the Powers interfered in Turkish misgovernment: (2) Here is a programme of reforms which We, Francis-Joseph, suggest should be offered to the Sultan by the Powers; and, if necessary, they should be enforced upon him. Austria was no doubt acting, if somewhat *à contre-cœur*, in collusion with Germany and Russia, and these were not ill-pleased when Derby refused to fall into line with them. This was probably a mistake. Old Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, one of the few people in the West who knew his Turks, deplored the refusal, and thought that by it we threw away the 'Concert of Europe' and let Russia in alone.

In April 1876 a fresh insurrection broke out in Bulgaria, the largest and most Russified of the Balkan Provinces. Cruel murders of Mohammedan officials inaugurated it. This produced in May a fresh Note, issued from Berlin, where the three Emperors, William, Francis-Joseph, and Alexander, had lately held a fraternal meeting. It contained a still more stringent programme of reforms, and suggested the enforcement of an armistice between the Sultan and his various rebels.

For some weeks it looked as if these rebels would win, and Turkey-in-Europe be divided between them. This would certainly have suited neither Austria nor Russia.

France and Italy, by accepting the Berlin Note, left Britain completely isolated. Derby rejected it because he was against all interference, Disraeli because he began to think that we might have to interfere, not against, but on behalf of, Turkey. The difference of opinion in the Cabinet was never completely healed, and, for good or evil, it fatefully weakened the Prime Minister's hands. The official leaders of the Opposition raised no obstacle to our rejection of the Note, and, on the whole, honourably left the decision, and the responsibility, to the Cabinet.

So matters stood when, on June 23, Serbia and Montenegro being then on the point of declaring war against Turkey, the *Daily News*, a Radical paper, published a report of some terrible massacres of Bulgarians by Turkish irregulars, those same 'Bashi-Bazouks' whom Raglan had refused to employ in the Crimean War. No one then knew, though many suspected, Disraeli among them, that the Bulgars had begun the famous 'atrocities', and it was not perfectly known till the publication of Sir Henry Elliot's *Reminiscences* in 1922. Elliot was our ambassador at the Porte. His book shows that the Bulgar insurrection had been fostered by Ignatieff as an excuse for the Tsar to intervene. Moreover, the information of the avenging massacres by the Bashi-Bazouks (which really took place and were very horrible) was secretly dispatched to London by private hands on purpose to thwart him, Elliot, and to embarrass the Government. Disraeli, who did not know this, grumbled rather unfairly at Elliot for not keeping him informed.¹ Anybody who reflected could have seen that the Turk, with his hands quite full of risings and wars in the western half of the peninsula, was not likely to *provoke* a rising within two hundred miles of his capital. Yet, the Bulgars having risen and begun the killing, the Turk would naturally take the shortest way of extinguishing them—the only way, indeed, that he or they knew. The whole thing was, however, a godsend to the left wing of the Opposition, and

¹ *Some Revolutions and other diplomatic Experiences*; by Sir H. Elliot, edited by his daughter, 1922. Introduction, p. viii.

advantage was taken of it, with a lack of scruple and a fiery passion, both inside and outside of Parliament, that has seldom been equalled; Gladstonians were quite ready to accuse Disraeli of having actually prompted the massacres; that he was a 'Jew who had always hated Christians', was one of the lightest of the accusations. Even before Gladstone himself, Gladstone's henchmen fell on their foe.

But the old lion's tail was swishing to and fro, faster and faster, and at last his roar burst. He had been reading about a Hyde Park meeting got up, on the subject of the massacres, by a fanatic called Stead,¹ and this set him off to write, and to publish early in September, his famous pamphlet, *Bulgarian Atrocities and the Question of the East*. The greatest atrocity, in the writer's mind, was the seventy-three-year-old Minister, who on August 12th had become Earl of Beaconsfield. It is a tissue of invective, couched in that tone of lofty moral indignation with which its author was accustomed to belabour scholars who questioned the Mosaic composition of the Pentateuch, and it was based on a similar perversion of facts and evidence. It has enriched our political language with several phrases, for instance that the Turks should be driven out of Europe 'bag and baggage'—a most excellent recommendation if we could have included the Russians in the same drive.²

Yet, with all its virtues, the pamphlet played at once into the hands of Russia. With more foundation than in 1853 Russia now believed that England would be for peace at any price, that Gladstone, not Beaconsfield, was the man of the hour. She therefore went boldly on, quite indifferent to any Concert of the Powers, and drew up a programme—in effect an ultimatum—for the Sultan. This included complete independence for Serbia and Montenegro, and autonomy, not only for Bosnia and Herzegovina, but also for a very large province miscalled Bulgaria. Meanwhile, in September,

¹ *Gladstone*, ii. 550.

² The ingenious Duc de Sully, when attributing to his late master, Henri IV of France, a 'Great Design' for reconstructing Europe, had suggested the expulsion of both.

events in the Balkans came thick and fast. The Serbs, badly beaten by the Turks, appealed to Europe, and Beaconsfield, perhaps owing to Cabinet pressure, had to agree with Russia in forcing on the victors a five months' armistice, to be followed by a Conference at Constantinople which would 'arrange all'.

To this Conference Lord Salisbury went at the end of the year as the representative of Great Britain. It was his first introduction to *la grande politique*. On his way he visited Paris, Berlin, Vienna, and Rome, and swiftly diagnosed the characters of their leading statesmen. But when he got to Constantinople he found himself, not so much 'hampered by his instructions' (as diplomats generally are), but left helpless for want of any definite instructions. He had always theoretically disliked the Turks, and he now learned many practical reasons for disliking them still more. Does Elliot¹ go a little too far when he suggests that the Marquis was bamboozled by Ignatieff? Well, the Marquis had failed to discover that Russia was secretly preparing for war against Turkey all the time. Nothing that he could say would persuade the Turk that we should not help him, if and when that war should come; and so he came away in January 1877 ἀπρακτος. In March there was a fresh attempt at an 'arrangement', for which Ignatieff came to London, but it was equally vain, as, no doubt, the Russians intended it to be. The Turks refused to put themselves in any tutelage whatever, and so the Tsar declared war on them at the end of April.

The varying fortunes in the year of war that followed were watched with intense interest in Britain. The early victories of the Turks at Plevna and at the Shipka Pass were hailed with joy; there was no doubt on which side collective British opinion was. Yet on the Armenian frontier Kars was lost, and on the appearance of our old antagonist, Todleben, the Balkan passes were at last forced, and the Russians pressed on. Adrianople capitulated, and on January 31st, 1878, an armistice was signed which left Constantinople at the mercy of the Tsar. What, then,

¹ *Some Revolutions*, 294.

should we do? ¹ The Cabinet was still divided, and its dissensions were reflected in those of the Liberal leaders. Only Gladstone and Argyll were strongly pro-Russian. Hartington and Granville had tried in vain to put some restraint on their old leader's tongue when he moved in Parliament, in April 1877, a series of resolutions—against what? One can only say, against the very existence of Beaconsfield, and the very existence of the Turks. All that year Derby merely said 'No war', and said nothing else. Carnarvon, Northcote, and Salisbury leaned, but not warmly, in the same direction. Cairns and Hardy were for war. The Queen was red-hot for war. Beaconsfield kept our Mediterranean fleet in Besika Bay, at the entrance to the Dardanelles, with its matches burning. The Man in the Street (and in the Music Hall) shouted for war.²

It is difficult to follow the course of Beaconsfield's own mind, and he was ill nearly all the summer of 1877. But his general attitude in 1878 was, 'if Russia touches Constantinople I will go to war; if there is a second campaign I will go to war. If there is to be a partition of Turkey, Great Britain must have a share, not Egypt, and not Crete, preferably some naval station like Alexandretta or Cyprus.' Twice during January 1878 he ordered the fleet *into* the Dardanelles, and twice he recalled it. His vacillation seems to have reduced Salisbury to something like despair. Yet the position of that fleet, and the fact that, early in February, Beaconsfield asked Parliament for a credit of six millions and got it, undoubtedly sobered the Russians, though it led Derby and Carnarvon to resign.³ Moreover, regular prepara-

¹ If we had then fought Russia and beaten her, should we not merely have smoothed Bismarck's path for him, and soon afterwards have had to fight Germany for *Weltmacht oder Niedergang*?

² A Radical parody of the famous 'Jingo' song is less known than the song itself:

'We don't want to fight, but, by Jingo, if we do,

We shall have a whacking Income Tax and a d—d good licking too.'

³ Derby resigned first in January, came back, and resigned finally in March.

tions for war were made, and the Commanders were named. And when in March Salisbury became Foreign Secretary, *vice* Derby, he began at once to throw his great moral weight, as he had never thrown it before, on to Beaconsfield's side. The tone of the Cabinet then became more firm. 'Your father', said Lord Beaconsfield, shortly before his own death, to Lady Gwendolen Cecil, 'is the only man of real courage that it has ever been my lot to work with.'¹

The armistice of January was very badly observed by the Russians, who began to draw their troops nearer and nearer to Constantinople. Beaconsfield answered by sending a few ships to anchor off the city. In London the war-fever was at its height in February. Gladstone's windows were broken (and on a Sunday, which added insult to injury). It was a wicked action of a brainless mob, and such things embarrassed Beaconsfield very much. Yet his courage rose, and we may safely say that, in the critical weeks that followed, his first thought was for the honour of Great Britain, his second for her interests in the Near East. On March 3 the Russians dictated, just outside the city, the Treaty of San Stefano to the Turks. It contained little beyond their ultimatum of the previous spring, except that it defined the 'big Bulgaria', which was to stretch from the Danube to the Aegean, and, westward, was to include nearly all Macedonia. This would give to the Bulgarians great tracts of territory inhabited by Serbs and Greeks. And here the Tsar overreached himself. For this was distinctly displeasing to Austria, with whom he had recently concluded a secret treaty. Austria began to pull away from him; Bismarck began to move in the same direction. The Treaty of San Stefano also gave to Russia that strip of Bessarabia which she had restored in 1856; it gave her Kars and a large bit of Armenia; it gave her the port of Batoum on the Black Sea and an indemnity of 45 millions. The details were not known in London for three weeks, but Beaconsfield had at once answered it by calling out the reserves and ordering 7,000 Indian troops to Malta. This

¹ *Salisbury*, ii. 205.

last was rather a theatrical *coup*, but it exemplified the solidarity of the British Empire; the Indians reached Malta in May.

The situation was a very unpleasant one. So far we stood absolutely alone. Few reasonable people wished to fight to bolster up the unspeakable Turk; yet fewer wished to see the Russians in possession of Constantinople and all which that possession implied. On April 1st Salisbury drew up and forwarded to the Powers a weighty circular criticizing the Treaty of San Stefano. The Russians had given him an opening by nervously suggesting that some of the provisions of that Treaty would be all the better for confirmation by a European Congress. The circular gave every one courage, and its effects were far-reaching. We agreed to go to a Congress (it should meet at Berlin in June), but insisted that the whole of the Treaty should be submitted to it. Moreover, we entered into a secret negotiation with Russia on the subject of our demands, and concluded an agreement with her on May 30. This proceeding has been fiercely criticized, yet surely with some injustice; for it would be madness to go and sit at a table without some preliminary agreement on the limits of concession, limits which the Congress might eventually overthrow, yet within which discussion could at least begin.

Passion was, however, excited in London when a newspaper published the fact, and something like the terms, of our agreement with Russia; and Lord Salisbury did not improve the temper of the Opposition by declaring this to be 'wholly inauthentic'. The Congress met on June 13, Beaconsfield and Salisbury going themselves as our representatives. A month was spent, under the presidency of Bismarck (who really seems for once to have 'played fair'), in modifying the Treaty of San Stefano. You may argue that it was not modified much, you may even assert that the talk was all over a *chose jugée*, for the only serious alterations were those which affected Bulgaria. Bulgaria north of the Balkans got autonomy, while that to the south was left to Turkey under a governor to be appointed by the Powers.

This southern province was to be called 'Eastern Roumelia' and was not to extend to the Aegean.¹ Russian influence was thus kept at a distance from the Mediterranean, and this was one of the points on which Beaconsfield laid the greatest stress. Macedonia was also left to the Turks. Elsewhere, Batoum was to be a free port, and not all the bit of Armenia that Russia had claimed was given to her. The rest of the Russian demands, concerning Serbia, Montenegro, &c., were confirmed.

The result of the Congress of Berlin is not to be sought in the terms of either Treaty; it lay rather in the reassertion of the Concert of Europe against Russian greed. The League of the Three Emperors, which had looked so threatening in 1876, was broken up, and from that hour the Russian peril gradually died away. The skill and patience of Salisbury and the calm self-assertion of Beaconsfield had combined for the purpose; they gave a lead which the other Powers, even the Power represented by Bismarck, were only too glad to follow. Bismarck generously acknowledged this—'the old Jew is the man' (*der Mann*), said he. I am not suggesting that it was a high moral achievement to have won the admiration of the great professional robber;² I am suggesting that Beaconsfield, in spite of his shocking client, led the Court, and led it in the direction in which every 'good European' would wish to go. And the impression that his attitude made on Continental Statesmen was undoubtedly very great. They got to learn that he would go his own way. So when, in 1879, Bismarck offered Beaconsfield a secret defensive alliance against Russia, the latter refused, for he smelt out that it would be meant against France as well, and the robber had to content himself with the Austrians; he made in that year the pact with them which was to bear such terrible fruit in 1914.

One result of the Congress of Berlin was that two-thirds

¹ Eastern Roumelia was united to Bulgaria in 1885, and hardly a pariah dog barked at the union.

² 'His idea of progress was evidently seizing something.' (*Beaconsfield*, vi. 322.)

of the Balkan Peninsula were finally liberated from the Turks, and that is always something. It was supposed that the 'new nations' then created might in time learn to behave like civilized human beings, and might even, one day, be a barrier against Russia. They have certainly not learned the former lesson yet.

Less satisfactory was the pact concluded between Great Britain and Turkey on the eve of the Congress (June 4). It contained a vague promise to assist Turkey (in the event of any fresh attack by Russia) on her Armenian frontier, and in return for this the Sultan ceded to us the 'administration' of Cyprus, both as a guarantee for the good government of his Christian subjects, and in order that, out of its revenues, the British creditors of the Sultan should be at least partially repaid. Cyprus, although justifying by its natural beauty Aphrodite's choice of a residence, has no good naval harbour, and is, moreover, situated 'out of the line'. Beaconsfield would have been better treated in history if he had brought back Egypt in his pocket. An open partition of Turkey-in-Europe, there and then, would have been the most honest course for the Powers. It was the difficulty of finding a trustworthy guardian for Constantinople that made such a partition impossible.

The Prime Minister hardly improved the situation by declaring, on his return to England, that he had brought back 'Peace with Honour'. The Man in the Street believed him and shouted for him, but his enemies might fairly say, 'we are glad to see the Peace, the less you say about the Honour the better'. They naturally failed to realize that Russia had been checkmated, for time alone would show that.

All this time Beaconsfield had not merely been watching Russia's progress in Europe, but also her steps towards our own Indian frontier. With Salisbury's full approval, when Salisbury was still at the India Office, he had selected Lord Lytton, son of the famous novelist, to succeed Northbrook as Viceroy. From the first, Lytton stood out as a champion of the 'forward', i. e. the anti-Laurentian, policy, and this involved the assertion of our influence over Afghanistan.

The details I must reserve for my Indian chapter. Lytton, no doubt, went faster than Beaconsfield desired; at least once the latter complained that his hand was being forced at Simla. But he who wills the end wills the means, and if Beaconsfield failed to grasp some of the necessary details of the means, it was hardly Lytton's fault. It was in pursuance of the forward policy that Victoria was proclaimed Empress of India with great pomp in full 'Durbar' by Lytton on January 1st, 1877. The 'Royal Titles Bill' had been got through Parliament in the previous session. The Queen herself desired this addition to her style, and it was she who persuaded her Minister (she was just inducing him to take an Earldom) to bring it forward when he did. Gladstone alone opposed the second reading of the Bill, Hartington and the 'regular troops' opposed only the third reading, which consequently had a lesser, though still a substantial, majority in its favour. The new title was only to be used in such official documents as related to the Indian Empire. To many people it seemed a trivial, and a tinsel, addition to a title which had been borne by Kings or Queens of England for a thousand years.

The year 1879, so disastrous to trade and agriculture at home, was also marked by a misfortune to our arms in South Africa and by some 'tight places' in Afghanistan. The tide had barely turned in Asia, and fresh troubles (with the Boers) were brewing in Africa, when Beaconsfield's Government fell in March 1880. Lord Carnarvon had not proved himself a wise Colonial Secretary so far as Africa was concerned. His success in 1867 with the Federation of British North America had been due to the fact that in that country the desire for union had at last overcome the long-resisting centrifugal elements. At an earlier date—for instance, when it was suggested by Sir George Grey in 1856—Dutch and English colonists alike might have welcomed a corresponding Federal Union of South Africa, but the Government of the day had ruthlessly turned Grey's proposals down. It had again been proposed in 1871 when Responsible Government was introduced in Cape Colony, and in 1876 Carnarvon

thought the time was come. A Bill for effecting the Federation was prepared, sent out to the Cape, slightly amended there, returned to England, and passed in the British Parliament in 1877. It had hardly reached Africa again before the Zulu War broke out. Federation would have given the white population, which, all told, was not one-fifth of that of the various shades of brown and black, a solidarity against the savages of which it stood in sore need. But the Boers, though quite willing to be saved by British arms, had now no intention of co-operating in any scheme of Government; they waited, in fact, for the first opportunity to rebel. Carnarvon seems to have been quite blind to the racial hatreds which the annexation (in 1877) of the Transvaal produced, blind also to the danger from the Zulus. These defeated us badly at Isandhlwana in January 1879, and were not finally crushed until August. Even Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, who succeeded Carnarvon early in 1878, had been slow to send reinforcements, and was quite ready to scold the High Commissioner, Sir Bartle Frere, who had at least saved Natal from the invading savages.

Yet in spite of these disasters, drags as they were on its popularity, few people were aware of the coming fall of the Government, and not many sober people really wished for it. Fickle as the electorate now was, recent by-elections had been in Beaconsfield's favour, and his own failing health seemed to be the worst rock ahead. A dissolution could not long be postponed, and the right moment had to be seized for it.

To Gladstone the sort of Roman triumph which had been accorded to, and complacently accepted by, Beaconsfield on his return from Berlin, appeared not only unjustifiable, but vulgar and wicked to the last degree. The Prime Minister had been a Mephistopheles before, he was an Apollyon now, and it was not unnatural if, drenched with Gladstonian invective from platform, Parliament, and press, Beaconsfield described his enemy as 'a sophistical rhetorician inebriated with the exuberance of his own verbosity'. Nor was the description far from the truth; even to his friends

Gladstone seemed to be beside himself in these years. A thoughtful reader of Lord Morley's great book, if inclined to weigh famous men in a true balance, can hardly fail to be saddened by a scene which its author narrates of February 1877, a scene of which he was himself an eye- and ear-witness. Sir John Lubbock, with whom Gladstone and Morley were staying, took them, together with Huxley and Playfair, to visit Darwin at Down on a Sunday afternoon. Gladstone was at that time 'in full glow against Turkish terrorism and its abettors. . . . The illustrious pair, born in the same year, had never met before. Mr. Gladstone, as soon as seated, took Darwin's interest in lessons of massacre for granted, and launched forth his thunderbolts with unexhausted zest'—in short, he talked Turk from start to finish, as he would have talked it to any one else, or to the empty air. It probably never occurred to him that he was in the presence of any one at all unusual.¹ Darwin, who had still five years of frail invalid life to face, years of which every minute was to be packed with priceless thought on the greatest problems of all time, must have been terribly fatigued; but he said in sweet humility to Morley, as his visitors were going away, 'What an honour that such a great man should come to visit me.' Gladstone's Diary (as quoted) does not mention Darwin's name!

It was not, however, till the autumn of 1879 that Gladstone found, and, strange to say, afterwards kept, an audience wholly to his mind. 'Scottish electors', says the late Sir Thomas Raleigh² (a Scot of Scots, born in Morningside, nurtured in the Free Church), 'often show great want of wisdom and balance; they lack the English spirit of compromise, which has its origin in history.' *Nimis perfervidum istorum ingenium*. Gladstone was, not remotely, of Scottish descent. In November 1879 he was invited by some ardent

¹ *Gladstone*, ii. 562. It would perhaps be fair to quote, in the same connexion, a letter of Beaconsfield's of April 1878, relating how, at a dinner-party which had bored him, he 'met Browning, a noisy conceited poet'. (*Beaconsfield*, vi. 283.)

² *Annals of the Church of Scotland*, p. xxi.

admirers to contest the Tory seat of Midlothian. All his life he had, as we know, been surrounded by a ring of flatterers and admirers, disinterested or interested; now he was to meet adulation on a scale with which even he had so far been unfamiliar. His journeys from Hawarden to Edinburgh and back, both in that November and at the General Election in the following March, were triumphal progresses, throwing utterly into the shade the acclaim which Beaconsfield had met after Berlin; and a new terror was added to electioneering by Gladstone's habit of making speeches at each railway station whereat his train stopped. The enthusiasm with which he was received in these 'Midlothian Campaigns' was as disastrous for his own sanity as it was for the future of Great Britain. No accusation was too reckless, no perversion of truth too blatant, for him to employ. Perhaps the climax was reached when he described the Zulus as 'defenders of their hearths and homes with their naked bodies against our artillery'.¹ Under these circumstances there is something to be said for the ballot, for Scottish mobs are fierce, and, with open voting, it would have needed a brave man to record his vote for Lord Dalkeith. It is not pleasing to find Gladstone attributing, in his Diary,² to the 'disposing guiding hand of God' his majority of 211 (out of about 3,000 votes) when the poll was declared in Edinburgh.

Beaconsfield would have preferred to wait for dissolution till the autumn of 1880, but he was overruled by his 'party-managers', who had failed to read the signs of the times. So he dissolved in March, and a Radical majority of a hundred and six, together with sixty-one Irish Home-Rulers, was returned. It is said that this result was largely due to the skill with which Mr. Chamberlain of Birmingham had 'tuned the Constituencies', just as seventeenth-century

¹ The Zulus were some of the bravest men to whom British troops ever stood up, but their army consisted wholly of trained professional soldiers, who lived by raiding their peaceful neighbours, and no soldier was allowed to marry before he had 'washed his spear' in the blood of some enemy.

² *Gladstone*, ii. 612.

party-managers had been wont to 'tune the pulpits'. But it can hardly be denied that Disraeli, with his 'Central Conservative Office', had initiated this evil custom so far as the nineteenth century is concerned.

It did not follow that Gladstone would again become Prime Minister, and it is obvious that the Queen would have preferred any one else to him. Lord Hartington, however, for whom she at once sent, was obliged to tell her that, after Midlothian, Gladstone was the only possible man. I may be wrong, but I think that I can read into the closing pages of Lord Morley's second volume a regret that his hero did not retire from public life 'after putting Apollyon and his legions to flight'.¹

¹ Ibid., ii. 619.

CHAPTER XI

INDIA, 1813-80¹

It may seem strange to be attempting a summary of the history of British India between 1813 and 1880 at a time when our politicians have recently thrown to the jackals everything that our Statesmen so laboriously built up, for the benefit of the Indian peoples, in those years. Yet any history of England which omitted to deal with the subject would be simply passing over the greatest achievement of our race. The change from the India described in Bishop Heber's *Narrative* of 1824-5, or even in the *Memoirs of a Griffin*, published in 1843,² to that described in the concluding pages of Lord Roberts's *Forty-One Years in India*,³ is amazing. It was wrought by the brains and devotion of a series of very great men, two or three of whom were Governors-General.⁴ The majority were soldiers or civilian administrators, sometimes both, and, as we should now say, 'specialists', often hereditary specialists. Many of them paid the forfeit of their lives, nearly all the forfeit of their health. Few reaped adequate reward if they returned to end their days in Europe. Although welcomed at first, they were seldom seriously aided, for any length of time, by the people whom they

¹ I owe most hearty thanks to my friend Mr. Ramsay Muir for having read this chapter and made many most valuable suggestions and corrections.

² By Captain F. J. Bellew, 2 vols. He was the brother of that Captain H. W. Bellew so unfavourably noticed by Lady Sale in her *Journal* published in the same year.

³ Roberts and his father, Sir Abraham, had between them nearly ninety years of Indian service. Even in 1852, the steam-voyage from England was an eight or ten weeks' affair, and it took the young gunner another three months to reach his father at Peshawur.

⁴ The title Governor-General of India was substituted for Governor-General of Bengal in 1834; that of Viceroy dates from 1859.

governed,¹ and they were often vilified at home. The indifference of the British people to Indian affairs is proverbial. There have been times when, in districts hopelessly misgoverned by Native Princes, the best chance for the introduction of law, order, education, and material progress, lay in annexation; and then the men on the spot, who alone could gauge the needs of India, were usually accused of greed and of lust for conquest.

The parallel between the Indian and the Roman Empires is closer than is always realized. It might even be stretched to include our modern idea of 'buffer-states', for the Roman protectorate of Armenia, against the Parthian, was curiously similar to that which we would fain have established against the Russians over Beloochistan and Afghanistan, and did to some extent establish in Nepaul, against the Chinese. And the beneficent intentions of the Age of the Antonines are almost reproduced in the words written by Lord Hastings to the Court of Directors at the close of the Third Mahratta War: 'A vast field for the melioration of man lies before us. The inhabitants are well aware of the comfort and security enjoyed by the subjects in the neighbouring territories of the Honourable Company, and indeed they have given every demonstration of eagerly anticipating an arrangement attended with no regrets to counterbalance their presumption in its favour.'² One of the greatest of the brilliant band of soldier-civilians of the early nineteenth century, Sir Thomas Munro, Governor of Madras, 1820-7, went farther, and, in a weighty Minute at the end of 1824, says that our whole aim should be to raise the character of the Natives, 'to give them a higher opinion of themselves by placing more confidence in them, by employing them in important situations, and perhaps by rendering them eligible to every office under Government. . . . We should look upon India not

¹ There were exceptions, for there have always been enlightened Natives who have thoroughly understood the value of our *Raj*, and the most sympathetic administrators, such as Elphinstone, always acknowledged the debt they owed to such men.

² June 20, 1818, Ramsay Muir, *Making of British India*, p. 275.

as a temporary possession but one which is to be maintained permanently, until the Natives shall have, in some future age, abandoned most of their superstitions and prejudices, and become sufficiently enlightened to frame a regular government for themselves and to conduct and preserve it. Whenever such a time may arrive it will probably be best for both countries that the British control over India should be gradually withdrawn. That the desirable change may, in some after age, be effected in India, there is no cause to despair.¹

These were hopeful words in 1824, but Munro was looking forward to centuries rather than to decades. And from him were hidden all the mechanical changes that were to come within a single century, changes far outrunning that moral change in the Indian peoples for which he hoped, and which alone could have fitted them for self-government. From him too was hidden the tragedy that education and equality of opportunity bring to the front, not the virile and trustworthy elements of the population, but the plausible, the glib-tongued, the cowardly, and the false; not the men with a 'stake in the country', or with ancient roots in the soil, but the 'clever' clerks, lawyers, journalists and accountants, whose whole lives are spent in the fetid atmosphere of huge cities. Indeed the whole story of the last fifty years, both at home and in the East, points to the idea that, instead of fitting weaker peoples for self-government, we have been steadily unfitting ourselves for that blessing.²

Lord Moira, who came out as Governor-General in October 1813, had been a Foxite Whig, and had dutifully opposed in Parliament all the acts of the great Marquis Wellesley. He therefore came pledged against all extension of the Company's

¹ Muir, 283-5.

² A shrewd Anglo-Indian wrote to me lately to this effect: 'When, in order to allow *Demos* his blessed word "self-determination", we shall have abandoned India, history may repeat itself and something like the old E. I. C. be born again; all white men in the East may combine to stop anarchy, and create a government independent of any European Power, with an army drawn from the warrior-castes and led by European officers.'

territories. Yet when he left India, as Marquis of Hastings, ten years later, he had added more than one-third to those territories. For the weak policy of the Home Government, which had been prescribed for Wellesley's successors, bore its natural fruit. Those who had looked on us as sure protectors—for instance, the ancient states of Rajpootana, and the states of Central India—were again at the mercy of the Mahratta sword, while those who looked upon us as potential enemies had been making full use of their opportunity.

The first of these in order of time were the Ghoorkas of Nepaul, themselves claiming to be of Rajpoot¹ blood, who had, barely half a century before, established a dominion over a Thibetan people

Where snowy-corniced Himalaya lifts
The World's white roof on high,

and in the seven hundred miles of foot-hills which border Oude and Bengal on the north. They had not abstained from raiding the fertile plains beneath them, and, small as was our experience of forest or mountain warfare, we were compelled to punish these raids, complaints of which reached back to Wellesley's time. The first year of our one Ghoorka War, 1814-15, was marked by several disasters, and it was not till February 1816 that Sir David Ochterlony finally received the submission of the Nepaulese Chieftains. They ceded to us a strip of territory bordering upon Rohilcund, which actually brought us in touch with an outlying piece of the Chinese Empire. The rest of Nepaul remained independent, and has been our firmest ally in the East from that day to this. Every one in India knows and loves the sturdy little Ghoorkas, who can run uphill faster than any other race in the world.

Much harder was Hastings's task in persuading, first himself, secondly his Council, lastly the Directors at home, to run the risk of a third Mahratta War, by extirpating the bands of the Pindarrees, who for many years had carried fire and sword all

¹ Rajpoots claim descent from the 'White Huns'. For my spelling of Indian names see note on vol. iv, p. 114.

over Central India and the Deccan from Delhi to Mysore. On the advice of young Charles Metcalfe this task was at last undertaken. The Pindarrees were in fact the dregs of the old Mahratta armies, and their doings were winked at, if not encouraged, by the five Mahratta sovereigns, whose ancestors, after all, had mostly begun their own careers in Pindarree fashion. The horrors which these robbers perpetrated (young girls 'carried off, tied three or four like calves on a horse', and so on),¹ when they raided a village, have often been told. Their whole object was loot. The smaller Rajpoot states were their most common prey, but they also raided our Protectorates, and even John Company's territory itself. Some of them were of Rohilla, some of Pathan race, like that famous Ameer Khan who quartered himself and 30,000 ruffians on Rajpootana, and eventually, by sitting down hard enough, got the little principality of Tonk. Heber² heard much of this gentleman's piety in his old age: 'now that he can no longer carry fire and sword from Bhopaul to Joudpore he has grown devout, dresses in sackcloth and rags, tells his beads and reads his Koran continually.' Hastings was eventually obliged, in order to avoid turning them loose, to enrol most of his followers in our Bengal army.

The Mahrattas did not quite dare to strike in unison on behalf of the Pindarrees, whose head-quarters, so far as they had any, were on the Neerbudda, in Holkar's territory in the province of Malwa; but it was only unison they lacked to restrain them from striking as in 1803-4. They too lived by plundering states like Bhopaul and Jeypore, once our allies but abandoned in 1806. Scindia at Gwalior and Holkar at Indore were the most dangerous, Baji Rao, the Peishwah at Poonah, was the most cunning, of the Mahratta Princes. Our year of failure in Nepaul set all Central India ablaze. Not till the autumn of 1816 were Moira's hands freed, and, as he determined on a large-scaled strategy, he took almost another year to prepare for his campaign. He might conceivably have to face nearly half a million of enemies. He

¹ Hastings's *Journal*, quoted by Muir, 259.

² *Narrative*, 1873 edn., 2 vols., ii. 61.

collected therefore an army of 100,000 men with nearly 300 guns, took command of the northern wing of it himself, and sent the southern wing to spread northwards fan-wise from Goojerat. The Mahrattas¹ struck indeed, but struck too late and struck singly, even while the bands of the Pindarrees were being broken up and hunted down, until Cheetoo, the last of their leaders, was found in a jungle half-eaten by a tiger. One by one, too, though not without stiff resistance, the Mahratta sovereigns yielded, and the war ended with the capture of the Bhonsla of Nagpore in April 1819. Probably many Pindarrees became *dacoits* (highway robbers), and dacoity is not wholly dead to-day. Some of them may have swelled the sect of the *Thugs*. Only the territories of the Peishwah were wholly forfeited, and the last Peishwah was deported to Cawnpore, where he was allowed a fine country-house at Bithoor and a pension of £80,000 a year. But the wings of the other Mahrattas were closely clipped, the Rajpoot Princes were delivered, and every state in India east and south of the Sutlej was now obliged to receive a British Resident, and to regulate its forces and its policy in accordance with the views of the Company.

Hastings was quadruply fortunate in that not only much of the fighting, but all the reorganization, of the vast districts then annexed and pacified, fell to such able hands as those of the three great Scotsmen, Thomas Munro, John Malcolm, Mountstuart Elphinstone, and the great Englishman Charles Metcalfe. All had been trusted agents of Wellesley's, all devoted their lives to India; Metcalfe, though he ended elsewhere and got a peerage for his services in Jamaica and Canada, spent thirty-eight years in India without leave; Munro spent twenty-seven.² All were fine linguists and had made a deep study of Indian problems, all were warm champions of the Natives, and at least two of them were

¹ Scindia did not actually strike, but he was continually watching for a chance, and it needed skilful strategy to neutralize him.

² Leave, in pre-Mutiny days, was only granted once in an Indian career, and never until ten years had been served.

advocates of the employment of Natives in high office.¹ Hastings was certainly well served, which, for a man in his position, must point to some gift for rule. He had also good luck, for it was in 1819 that the island of Singapore, then almost deserted, was occupied for us by Sir Stamford Raffles. This put an end to the belated attempts of the ungrateful Dutchmen, all of whose Spice-islands except Ceylon we had restored in 1814, to cut us off from the China trade.² The first Education Act for India was passed in the year in which Hastings landed, and he was a warm patron of Ram Mohun Roy's foundation, later known as the 'Presidency College' at Calcutta. In spite of his expensive wars, he was able to leave a surplus of over three millions in the Indian Treasury.

His successor Lord Amherst, 1823-8, had, except for the First Burmese War, a fairly peaceful reign. Amherst's early years saw the arrival, and too early death, of Reginald Heber, first Bishop of Calcutta, to whose charming *Narrative of a Journey through the Upper Provinces of India in 1824-5* I have been much indebted. This reign was also marked by a recrudescence of that fear of Russian advance towards Persia and Turkestan which was to bear disastrous fruit a decade later; by serious attempts in Madras, Bombay, and the North-West Provinces, to adjust the land-revenue on more equitable principles; and by a sudden revolt of the Rajah at Bhurtpore. The land-revenue was always a most difficult question, especially since the so-called 'permanent settlement' in Bengal, of the days of Cornwallis, had broken down. Every fresh settlement, indeed, produced irritation, for legal English minds required all landowners to prove a 'sound title' and too often nothing of the kind was forthcoming; hence came, during the surveys, frequent 'dis-seisins', and consequent vexation to the larger landowners,

¹ Elphinstone, perhaps the most brilliant of the four, was also in favour of a dual system of education, to be based both upon Western and Eastern originals.

² The monopoly of the E. I. C. for all eastern trade continued till 1813, that for the China trade till 1833.

without any real satisfaction to the peasants in whose favour they were made. In 1856 the same problem became acute in Oude and aggravated the Mutiny.

Bhurtpore was a mighty fortress a little south of the Jumna and west of Agra; it had successfully resisted Lake in 1805. A usurping Rajah took the opportunity to revolt because he knew that our first year's campaign in Burma had been a failure; but his fortress was now taken, chiefly by mining operations, after a few weeks' siege, by Lord Combermere in January 1826.

Amherst was not unacquainted with the East, for he had been on a fruitless embassy to China in 1816, and he had to face, soon after his arrival, a war quite outside the limits of India, yet one essentially necessary for the defence of its north-eastern frontier. The Mongol Kingdom of Ava, or Burma, was barely seventy years old, and rested wholly on the sword. Even in Wellesley's time its extension down the eastern shore of the Bay of Bengal, its continual raids towards Dacca and Chittagong, had become problems. Its king puffed himself out like an Emperor of China; he had the awkward habit of killing at sight any one who brought him bad news, or suggested negotiation with his enemies. His men were tough fellows and cunning fighters. His army, hanging upon our frontier in 1823, was very large. His forests and swamps were almost impenetrable. Moreover, our high-caste Sepoys objected, with good religious reason, to cross the sea, and a mutiny took place at Barrackpore close to Calcutta. After a tough struggle, in 1824-5, for the valley of the Brahmapootra, for the Sylhet and Chittagong frontiers, the difficulties of the campaign were gradually overcome both by land and sea. Troops without caste prejudices were dispatched from Madras to Rangoon and penetrated some way up the Irrawaddy. After our victory we took over, by the Treaty of Yandaboo, 1826, the protectorate of Assam and a strip of territory along the eastern shore of the Bay. British merchants began to establish themselves in Rangoon, in spite of the climate and in spite of the attentions of the Burmese governor of the province of Pegoo, which were

seldom polite. The Directors in London grumbled at the cost of the war, which had swallowed up Hastings's surplus, and the Whiggish section of the Ministry desired to recall Amherst; he, however, departed of his own free will in March 1828. He had been the first Governor-General to pay a visit to Simla, a health resort in the hills of the province ceded to us by Nepaul in 1816; the first English house was built there in 1819.¹ Not till 1835 was Darjeeling, much nearer to Calcutta, acquired by purchase from a local Rajah.

Lord William Bentinck arrived in the July following Amherst's departure, a man of old Indian experience,² and a champion of reform, peace, and economy. His seven years were the quietest before the Mutiny. His high courage, self-confidence, and devotion have always received due praise. He would not have shrunk from war if the interests of oppressed subjects or devastated frontiers had made war necessary. He had served in the Napoleonic wars, and in 1833 he became his own Commander-in-Chief, as Cornwallis and Moira had been. His eyes were constantly turned north-westwards to, and beyond, the Punjaub. There Runjeet Singh, the founder of the Sikh power, was loyally keeping the treaty which Metcalfe had made with him in 1809,³ and watching anxiously against a possible renewal of the war between rival Afghan clans, Dost Mohammed *versus* Shah Soojah. In Bentinck's first year came the treaty between Tsar Nicholas and the Persians, which left Persia almost a vassal of Russia; Bentinck quite envisaged a possible Perso-Russian advance upon Herat. He envisaged also a possible revolt of our Bengal Sepoys, 'always', as he said, 'liable to be practised on by religious agitators'. Yet it was Bentinck who first challenged Hindoo prejudice by the decree of 1829 abolishing *Suttee*.

The Company, even when it had become the Paramount Power in India, had hitherto refused to interfere even with

¹ Compare *Kim*, p. 208.

² He had governed Madras in Wellesley's last years.

³ Runjeet Singh agreed not to allow his army to cross the Sutlej south-eastward.

the most absurd, the most cruel, practices by which the Natives placated their innumerable gods. It had poured cold water on early missionary efforts. Its servants were, however, continually brought face to face with horrible religious cruelties, at which both humanity and common sense revolted. Even the gangs of *Thugs*, who beguiled, robbed, strangled, and buried peaceable travellers, believed they were propitiating the goddess Kali.¹ The Rajpoot princes clung to female infanticide not merely because there was not enough noble blood in India to absorb their daughters in marriage; religious reasons also were at the bottom of this horror.² At the other end of the scale the aboriginal Ghonds of Orissa were known to practise human sacrifice. And the self-immolation of *Suttee* widows on the funeral-pyres of their husbands was regarded by high-caste Brahmins as a sacred duty. In Lower Bengal alone some eight hundred widows *per annum* became *Suttee*, and no doubt many inconvenient old women were made away with under this pretence. How far such practices were ancient, or consistent with the 'primitive nature-worship', then attributed to the early Aryan races, is unknown. In Bentinck's time many intelligent Natives believed that they were fairly modern accretions. More recent study of comparative religion has led scholars to think otherwise; the farther back you go, the more cruel religion has been.³

Successive Governors had been harassed by the problem, and some attempts had been made, e. g. by an ordinance of 1813, to regulate *Suttee*. Heber had spoken strongly for

¹ 'Thug' = deceiver; the best account of the sect is in the late Mr. V. Smith's edition of Sleeman's *Rambles and Recollections*, 1915, 78-91, 650 sqq., and in Colonel Meadows Taylor's *Confessions of a Thug*, 1839.

² Dhuleep Singh once told the second Lord Hardinge that he remembered, as a child, seeing his sisters put into sacks, and thrown into the river. (Hardinge's *Life of Hardinge*, in *Rulers of India Series*, 165.)

³ As late as 1864 there were religious riots in Bengal because the Government prohibited the throwing of dead bodies into the Hooghly.

prohibition. The arguments against this were that it would be regarded as a step towards a forcible conversion to Christianity; and that, at least, it would produce a mutiny in our Bengal army. Bentinck's Minute of November 8, 1829,¹ shows him honourably facing these dangers and acting on his own responsibility, in the name of humanity alone. It prohibited *Suttee* throughout the dominions of the Company.² No such evil results as had been feared were manifested; indeed scarcely a dog barked when the proclamation was made. In the same year, 1829, the suppression of *Thuggee* was definitely undertaken, special powers being given to magistrates to arrest *Thugs*; how difficult it was to obtain evidence, yet how welcome to all classes the suppression was, may be read in that delightful book, Sleeman's *Rambles and Recollections*.

Economy, as well as the desire to raise the moral character of the Natives, led to their extensive employment in minor judicial posts, and this was a marked feature of Bentinck's reign. In the same reign a controversy, which had long been afoot between the champions of Oriental and of Western learning,³ as the basis for Native education in the Government schools, was at last terminated in favour of the 'Westerners'. 'If all the nonsense that has been talked for the last quarter of a century on all other subjects were

¹ Muir, 293 sqq.

² No doubt the practice long continued in secret, perhaps still continues; and of course it continued unchecked in such independent Native States as would not by treaty agree to abolish it.

³ Certainly since the Act of 1813, which had first set apart a definite sum for education. The main point in dispute was whether English or the Arabic and Sanskrit languages were to be the vehicle of instruction. Persian, which remained the language of the Government and the Law Courts down to 1837, was perhaps also a 'learned language'. Sir Charles Trevelyan (*On the Education of the People of India*, 1838, 38 sqq.) makes excellent fun of the parallel that, when the Romans decided to study Greek Literature, Science, and Medicine, the reactionaries no doubt cried out against the abandonment of the old Etruscan learning. The whole history of the question is admirably summed up in the *Report of the Calcutta University Commission, 1917-1919*, vol. i.

thrown into one scale, and all that has been talked on the subject of education into the other, I think the latter would preponderate,' says Dr. Opimian.¹ He was not far wrong. And, although those who sought to train their Indian fellow subjects in such learning as is open in Europe to every European were actuated by the highest motives, we are now beginning to realize that the *average* Eastern mind (there are, no doubt, many splendid exceptions) is not capable of profiting by such learning. Indians can cull rapidly and superficially the 'flowers' of Western culture, but, as yet, they have not been able to absorb its solid lessons, nor build up their characters on it.

The Act of 1833, passed to wind up the commercial business of the East India Company, and to guarantee to its stockholders a dividend of five *per cent.*, contained a clause adding a 'legal' member to the Governor-General's Council. One of the few things about which Macaulay, the first holder of this office, knew nothing was Law; but he believed himself qualified (there are, we all know, few things for which a Fellow of Trinity is not qualified) to close the educational controversy with a bang;² and his famous Minute of February 2, 1835,³ led to the adoption of English as the vehicle of instruction in Government schools, and to the substitution of Western science and history for the Arabic and Sanskrit mythologies and medical treatises, for the 'history abounding with kings thirty feet high and reigns thirty-thousand years long, for the geography made up of seas of butter or seas of treacle'.⁴ Heber in 1824 had visited the Vidalaya College at Benares and had heard two hundred students being taught that there is under the South Pole a tortoise upon whom the world rests.⁵ Natives fed on such nonsense could never be fit to help us

¹ *Gryll Grange*, by T. L. Peacock, 1860.

² When Macaulay arrived the 'Orientalists' and 'Occidentalists' were equally balanced.

³ Muir, 298 sqq.

⁴ I do not know whether such things are to be found in Arabic or Sanskrit books, but Macaulay was quite capable of inventing them if they are not.

⁵ *Narrative*, i. 169.

to govern India, but it was not until Dalhousie's time that the Native schools, each teaching in the vernacular of its district,¹ received Government aid and Government inspection. Macaulay was also member of a Commission appointed to draft a penal code, and he laboured at this task till his return to England in 1838.

Bentinck went home early in 1835, and for over twelve months Sir Charles Metcalfe held the government *ad interim*. The Directors had at first wished for his appointment, but when they heard that he had proclaimed freedom of the press in India, they scolded him, and accepted Melbourne's nominee, Lord Auckland, who reached Calcutta in March 1836.

Auckland's Government, 1836-42, was so conspicuous for one thing, the First Afghan War, that the famine in the North-West Provinces, with which it began, is often forgotten. Yet it was a famine that makes one wonder how so many Indian sovereigns could have chosen a capital in such an arid plain as that which surrounds Delhi.² Governor after Governor had laboured to restore the irrigation works which had at least been begun, and in some cases completed, by the Moguls, and had then been left to perish. There was a Public Works Department, at least from Amherst's time, but its beneficent activity dates from Dalhousie's. 'More irrigation and less self-government,' is said to have been the prayer of a sensible Rajah in 1914, and he was not far wrong. The 'Doab' between the Ganges and the Jumna was the most suffering district in 1837. Channels and tanks have always been India's greatest need, not only to store water, against droughts, but also to carry it off when the rains are too violent.

¹ The so-called 'Anglo-vernacular' schools, in which English was taught as a subject, together with other subjects. They have not been a great success, but the difficulties are enormous, for there are said to be 137 vernaculars in India.

² Delhi was the great meeting-place of roads, as it is of railways to-day, and the link between the valleys of the Ganges and the Indus. There are, in fact, seven successive Delhis, whose ruins still strew the plain for miles around. It was Shah Jehan who finally made it the capital and gave his own name to it.

Auckland had been in the Cabinets of 1830 and 1835. He was the son of that bad man who owed everything to Pitt and turned against his benefactor. Afghanistan had loomed large to Anglo-Indian eyes for some years; in the main, as a factor in that dread of Russia which filled so many files in every Foreign Office in Europe throughout the nineteenth century. In 1809 Lord Minto, fearing a combination of French and Russians, had sent embassies both to Teheran and Cabul.¹ The doctrine of 'buffer-states' and protectorates was vague in 1838, and is, at its best, only a doctrine.² Afghanistan, suitable buffer or no, is a dreadful country, inhabited by peculiarly fierce, treacherous and fanatical Mohammedans. There are but two (at most three, if we include the Kuram Pass) tolerable entries to it from India, the Bolan Pass, leading via Quetta to Candahar, and the more famous Khyber, from Peshawur direct to Cabul. Like so many of the old Mogul provinces, Afghanistan was not a true political unit, and only twice in recent times had the same Ameer been acknowledged at Cabul, Candahar, and Herat; obeyed he hardly ever was. Dost Mohammed, Ameer of Cabul since 1826, came near to being a great ruler; he had beaten his rival Shah Soojah, and he had recently sought our friendship in the hope of recovering Peshawur, wrested from him in 1834 by old Runjeet Singh. He would never have thought of active hostility to us (indeed, how could he get at us, with all the Punjaub and Scinde lying between?) if we had handled him properly. But the exiled Shah Soojah was tempting us on the one side, and the Russians were tempting the Dost on the other.

The Persians, at the bidding of their Russian allies—or masters—were preparing to attack Herat, and the colder the shoulder we turned to Dost, the more Dost was inclined

¹ Or rather to Peshawur, whither Shah Soojah, on the eve of losing his throne, came to receive Elphinstone, and impressed him rather favourably (see *An Account of the Kingdom of Caubul*, by Mountstuart Elphinstone, 2nd ed., 1819, i. 103).

² See some shrewd remarks on this in Sir A. Lyall's *British Dominion in India*, ed. 1919, 338.

to listen to Russian agents. What these had to offer him is not very clear. Bentinck had indeed spoken of his dread of 'Russia and her wild Turkestan and Afghan allies'; yet two thousand terrible miles separated our frontiers; the first Russian expedition that ever started for Khiva (to rescue some Russian captives) was badly handled *en route*, and it was an Englishman, (Sir) Richmond Shakespear,¹ who eventually (1840) conducted the said captives in safety to Orenburg. No doubt, however, Russia was an adept at the game of brag and bounce.

Now in 1837 Auckland determined, against better advice in his Council, but with the approval of the Directors and of the Home Government (i.e. of Palmerston), to send Alexander Burnes, who had already penetrated in an unofficial capacity to Bokhara, on a 'commercial mission' to Cabul. Burnes reached that city in September 1837, and found little commerce to further. He got on well with the Dost, who still hoped for our help, offensive against the Sikhs, defensive against the Russians. While, however, Burnes was in Cabul, unable to satisfy the former request, three things happened: the Persians began the siege of Herat, November 1837; William Macnaghten, Auckland's Foreign Secretary, began to listen to Shah Soojah; and a Russian agent arrived in Cabul. Dost long refused to receive this person, but, when he got wind of Auckland's new leanings, he swung round towards the Tsar.² Burnes quitted Cabul, bitterly disappointed, in the spring of 1838, and, when he got back to Calcutta, came fully round to Macnaghten's view. The result was a Triple Treaty in June 1838 between Auckland, Runjeet Singh, and Shah Soojah, pledging the Company to replace the last named as sovereign in Cabul, and, incidentally, to relieve Herat. Herat, however, being bravely defended by an Englishman, Eldred Pottinger, relieved itself when the

¹ He was Thackeray's first cousin; as children they came home together in 1817. Some of *Colonel Newcome* was drawn from him, and there is a beautiful passage about him in a *Roundabout Paper*.

² Lady Sale, *Journal*, 157, mentions a Russian brass gun, used by the Afghans against the British in Cabul.

Persian army melted away, starving, in September 1838, and the Tsar, wiser than Auckland, abandoned for the time all aggressive ideas. As the only conceivable excuse for our new Afghan policy had been to checkmate Russia, now was our time to draw back. Runjeet Singh, though he had reason to fear the Dost, was near his own end, and his fears for the future of the Punjaub were still greater. Shah Soojah could have been pacified by a pension.

But Macnaghten, headstrong and ill-balanced, was in charge, and carried the cold reticent Auckland with him against all advice. Runjeet had stipulated that none of our troops should march through the Punjaub. Therefore we should have to violate the territory of Scinde, and the Ameers of Scinde were induced, more or less unwillingly, to subscribe the Triple Treaty. By an earlier treaty with Scinde (1828) we were pledged not to use its great river, the Indus, for military navigation; Auckland now 'suspended' this clause.¹ Metcalfe, who had just left India for good, was strongly opposed to Auckland's policy, and so was James Outram, one of the wisest and most heroic figures of the coming age. So our march was to be down the Indus, and then back, northwards, by Quetta, over the Bolan Pass to Candahar; that is to say, through the waterless, foodless, shadeless, robber-haunted desert of eastern Beloochistan. Troops were landed at Kurrachee, which we calmly occupied (it belonged to Scinde), and took the same route. After fearful losses of transport, the first column reached Candahar in April 1839 with the puppet Shah Soojah in train. Only at Ghuznee, on the road from Candahar to Cabul, did Dost's people put up any fight, and when Cabul was occupied in August, all seemed over. Dost had fled to his northern mountains. In spite, however, of great jubilation in England, and of a shower of honours² conferred on the victors (at

¹ Auckland's *Official Justification of the War* (Muir, 312 sqq.) is a most disingenuous document: even worse was the fact that Burnes's own dispatches from Cabul were actually mutilated, before publication, after Burnes's death. This was not publicly known till 1859.

² 'Wait till you see the troops safely out of Afghanistan before you

which young Mr. Disraeli mocked in a wonderfully prescient speech), no one in Afghanistan welcomed Shah Soojah.¹ We could make him Ameer, but he only got even nominal allegiance from his fierce subjects by bribery. The gold for this was lavishly supplied by Macnaghten, who accompanied the army as Chief Commissioner. Burnes was with them also. No Russian interference was to be dreaded, and we might then safely have left Soojah to the tender mercies of his own people. But Macnaghten would not hear of this, and, as the old 'Lion of the Punjaub', Runjeet Singh, died in the same summer, we could send reinforcements without scruple across the Punjaub and through the Khyber. A garrison was established at Jellalabad in that pass; others were left at Candahar and Ghuznee, while our main strength was concentrated at Cabul. The Khyber route was never easy, for the Afridis at its eastern end often interrupted our communications. Dost had fled to Bokhara, and Macnaghten wasted men in wild expeditions in that direction. He also chose an indefensible position, just outside Cabul, for the cantonment of the garrison, on low ground surrounded by hills. He and Burnes were scheming to occupy Herat as well.

Why prolong the tale? Early in 1840 risings broke out against Soojah. Far southwards the pretenders to Runjeet's throne at Lahore, while squabbling among themselves, were also perhaps intriguing with Dost. In November Dost fought a drawn battle with General Sale in north-western Afghanistan, and then, to every one's surprise, suddenly surrendered himself, was honourably received, and sent to India with a pension to console him. Macnaghten kept on asking for troops to replace our constant losses, and also for more gold to bribe with, as no one paid any tribute to Soojah. This irritated the Directors in England, and, early in 1841, pass votes of thanks,' said the Duke of Wellington. This was quoted by Sir Charles Forbes at the quarterly Court of the Directors, Dec. 11th, 1839.

¹ Whether the 'good king', as Macnaghten used to call him, was subsequently treacherous or not, is difficult to say. Lady Sale more than once hints that she suspected him (e.g. *Journal*, 84). But in 1841 he was in an extremely 'tight place'.

withdrawal was seriously discussed at Calcutta. Yet British wives were allowed to join their husbands in Cabul. The first serious blow came when Macnaghten was ordered to cut down the large gratuities with which he had kept Afghan chiefs more or less quiet. The Khyber was at once blocked up to the gates of Jellalabad. An inexperienced General, Elphinstone, had recently taken command in Cabul, and, when that city rose on November 2, 1841, and Burnes was murdered, Elphinstone lost his head. His only sensible proposal was to fall back at once on Sale, who was then holding Gundamuck, a little in advance of Jellalabad. Macnaghten long refused to listen to this suggestion, but, at the end of a month of incessant attacks on our cantonments, and of very heavy losses, he was obliged to negotiate for something much worse, capitulation. Some terms were signed on December 10 which seemed to assure the retreat, at least with their lives, of the Cabul garrison—nearly 5,000 men with 10,000 camp-followers; but their fulfilment was put off from day to day, and on December 23 Macnaghten was murdered by Dost's son, Akbar Khan who, if any one, was in command of the insurgents. On January 6th, 1842, Elphinstone's retreat, under a safe-conduct from Akbar, began. There were few litters, and the ladies rode or walked as best they could—generally in deep snow. The terrible cold of an Asian winter brooded over all. Whether Akbar could have held back the wild tribes, or no, is doubtful, but he did not, and the long column was under fire¹ from the first. Akbar was at least comparatively merciful to the hundred and twenty women, children, hostages, and wounded men, who had to be left to his charge on the fourth day. But the Khyber knife does not leave many wounded, and, out of some fifteen thousand men, only one, Dr. Brydon,² survived to reach Jellalabad.

¹ 'The Afghan horsemen have two or three matchlocks or *juzails* each, slung at their back, which carry much further than our muskets.' (Lady Sale, *Journal*, 102, 124, 364.)

² He afterwards went through the siege of Lucknow in 1857, and lived till 1878.

No such disaster had yet befallen British arms in India, and it did not improve our prospects that three of our few European regiments had recently been dispatched to serve in the First Chinese War. That there was no rising in British India, and no outburst of Sikh fanaticism on the Sutlej front, has always been a matter for wonder. Auckland's advice was now as timid as it had previously been rash. He ordered General Pollock, from Peshawur, merely to relieve Jellalabad (which Sale's men, in spite of an earthquake, had been busy strengthening), and then to fall back across the Indus. General Nott, however, was holding out at Candahar, though Ghuznee had fallen, and was hoping for relief from Quetta. And both Pollock and Nott ignored all orders for precipitate retreat. Auckland went home in March 1842; how far he should bear all the blame it is difficult to say. After the disastrous event there was a chorus of severe criticism from all sides, and some of it may have been unfair.

Lord Ellenborough was Peel's rather unfortunate choice to replace Auckland, and he arrived a few days before Auckland's departure. Some of his first orders were as timid as Auckland's last, and were equally ignored. The *mot d'ordre* from home was now severe retribution on the Afghans, and then swift withdrawal. This was as brave as it was wise, and its execution was left to Pollock and Nott. In April the former advanced with the aid of a Sikh contingent brought by Captain Henry Lawrence,¹ whose earliest service had been in the Burmese War. Nott forced his way north-eastwards from Candahar, and the two armies, after severe fighting, converged on Cabul in mid-September. The city was partially sacked, for the victorious troops got out of hand, and its great bazaar was destroyed. The surviving prisoners, including Lady Sale, whose *Journal of the Disasters in Afghanistan, 1841-2*,² was published in 1843, bribed their

¹ The 'Lawrence' of Lady Sale's *Journal* is the eldest of three famous brothers, George, Military Secretary to Macnaghten; he was one of the few who bore themselves bravely through all the disaster.

² This *Journal* is the best authority for the whole story from Sept. 1841 to Sept. 1842. Lady Sale is perhaps hard on Macnaghten

way out of captivity until they were met and escorted by Sir R. Shakespear. Then the united forces fell back through the Khyber, leaving Jellalabad in the hands of the Sikhs. Dost returned in peace to his throne, and is credited with a remark which recalls that of Caractacus when a prisoner in Rome.¹ He lived and kept a kind of order in Afghanistan till 1863, and, though in 1848 he for a moment threw in his lot with the Sikhs, he ever afterwards respected, nay, befriended, the Paramount Power, even during the Crimean War and the Mutiny.

A successful conclusion of the Chinese War was announced in England at the same time as the good news from India. This War was a direct result of the opening of the China trade in 1833. As long as only the great corporation in Leadenhall Street negotiated with a similar corporation of Chinamen, called the 'Hong merchants', at Canton, it had been possible to regulate and protect that trade. But now that it was open to every British ship, it was as difficult to enforce the tariffs as to police the coasts, and smuggling, especially of Indian-grown opium, began on a vast scale. By 1837 disputes were rife, and claims for compensation were enormous. Some British subjects were kept in noisome

(and it must be remembered that Henry Lawrence afterwards wrote in his defence), but she does not scruple to speak of 'our panic-stricken garrison' and the madness of not occupying the Citadel 'where we could have defied all Afghanistan'. She was a stout-hearted woman; after all the horrors of the retreat, in which she was wounded, and after months of captivity, during which she and the other prisoners were hurried about the country, constantly expecting death, she writes on May 10, 1842, 'Now is the time to strike the blow, but I much dread dilly-dallying because a handful of us are in Akbar's power. What are *our* lives when compared with the honour of our country?' (p. 342). She has humour too: 'we suffered [as prisoners] more from uncleanness than anything else; it was not till our arrival here that we completely got rid of lice, which we denominated infantry; the fleas for which Afghanistan, and particularly Cabul, is famed, we called light cavalry' (pp. 405-6).

¹ 'How, when possessed of such magnificence as this, can you covet our humble cottages in Britain?' (Zonaras, *Chronicon*, 186, in Migne, *Patrologia Graeca*, cxxxiv.)

Chinese jails, the lives of others were in danger. Actual war did not begin till 1840. Sir Hugh (afterwards Lord) Gough finished it in 1842, the island of Hong Kong was ceded to Britain, and five Chinese ports were to be thrown open to the trade of the world. The treaty was badly kept on both sides, and it needed a second war, in 1857-60, to force open the door of the greatest of the five ports, Canton itself.

Lord Ellenborough was a man of ideas, and a man of ability, who had twice been at the Board of Control in England. But he was vain and rash, and an untrustworthy colleague. His attention was immediately called to Scinde in the valley of the lower Indus, which flows to its deltaic mouths south of the fine harbour of Kurrachee. There are deserts on both sides of the river ; Scinde is, in fact, a portion of the 'Western Desert'. Its Government, about half a century old, was in the hands of a Mohammedan family, whose confederate members were known as 'the Ameers'. At the important military post of Sukkore the road to Beloochistan crosses the Indus. Hyderabad, the capital, lies some way downstream from Sukkore. The Treaty of 1828 had abrogated all tolls on the Indus in favour of the Company. Auckland, when he compelled the Ameers to support his Afghan War, had practically torn up this Treaty. He had occupied both Sukkore and Kurrachee, and Ellenborough refused to surrender either, although James Outram, then our agent at Hyderabad, protested against their retention, as he had protested against the Afghan War, and as he was to protest against the whole of the subsequent proceedings in Scinde. Outram did not pretend that the Ameers had been faithful during the late war, or that they were not in arrears with their promised contribution of cash, or that they did not grossly misgovern their unhappy subjects. None of these things, however, said Outram, could justify an attack on these Ameers. Ellenborough therefore sent Sir Charles Napier with full powers to Scinde.

Sir Charles, an old Peninsula hero, of a family of heroes, had none of Outram's scruples and few of his own. He knew that our prestige needed restoration, and, in a vigorous

Minute of October 17, 1842,¹ he gave reasons for attacking and annexing Scinde—‘the interests of the British Government and of humanity are in this case one’. He also knew that no treaties would long bind the Ameers, and he therefore offered them a fresh one, sending Outram to Hyderabad to present it. Even while the Ameers were signing this document they were preparing to attack us, and Outram had to fly for his life. A few days later Napier fell on their huge undisciplined army and utterly defeated it, against odds of ten to one, at Meeanee, February 1843. The Ameers were then deposed and Scinde was incorporated in the Bombay Presidency.² At home and in India, nearly every one condemned this aggression; indeed, it stands quite alone among our Eastern annexations. Ellenborough was recalled and Sir Henry Hardinge came out in his place. Before Ellenborough departed, he had to deal with a belated ‘one-man’ Mahratta rising at Gwalior. It was a fortunate event, for the Gwalior regency had no excuse for breaking the peace, and, if its huge army had been on foot in 1845–6 or 1848, we should probably have been beaten in the Sikh Wars of those years. After two defeats the Mahratta was compelled to sue for peace and to disband half his army.

Hardinge was no man of genius, but a simple honourable soldier, the most trusted friend of the great Duke. Barely a year of peace was granted him. The word *Sikh* means ‘disciple’, and the *Khalsa*, or army of the Sikhs, had grown up as a religious brotherhood, mostly of Hindoo (Jaut) blood and faith, but with some puritan elements borrowed from Islam. In Minto’s Governorship Runjeet Singh had overrun the Punjaub and the valley of the Upper Indus in Cashmere. His natural enemies were the Afghans, and there was seldom peace on his north-western frontier. Towards the Company he had faithfully observed the Treaty of 1809, mentioned

¹ Muir, 328–9.

² It was not till 1850 that Bartle Frere became Chief Commissioner of Scinde, but from that date began an administration of the province which is worthy to rank alongside of that of the Lawrences in the Punjaub.

above, and so, though a large extent of country south-east of the Sutlej was cultivated by men of Sikh faith, the Khalsa had never been allowed, in his lifetime, to cross that river. Ludhiana and Ferozepore had thus become outposts of our North-West Provinces. On Runjeet's death in 1839 the Khalsa more or less took charge, and there were several murders and depositions of claimants to the throne of Lahore. Runjeet's youngest and favourite wife was playing, now for her own hand, now for some paramour, and, in her anxiety to get quit of the 'praetorian' control of the Khalsa, she encouraged its leaders, late in 1845, to attack our outposts beyond the Sutlej. Hardinge had been anxious to avoid giving any pretext for this, but he had been obliged to strengthen his western garrisons, and none too soon. Sir Hugh Gough, his Commander-in-Chief, was, like himself, a gallant Peninsula veteran, but neither organizer nor strategist, and, some would say, no tactician.¹

The Sikhs were the most formidable foes we had yet met in India ;² they had been drilled by European officers, and Runjeet Singh had been a man of real genius. Their artillery was heavier and better served than our own. They were skilful with the spade, and were now throwing up a great entrenchment at Ferozeshah. Gough's first two battles with them, Moodkee and Ferozeshah in December 1845, were only just won. Hardinge served under Gough as second-in-command, though he was once obliged to control Gough's impetuosity, and to 'act as Governor-General again'. At Moodkee, Gough was partially surprised ; it was a *melée* fought in fog and darkness, and some Sepoy regiments disgraced themselves. There were two dangerous night-marches between the battles. The fight at Ferozeshah lasted two half-days. Sir Harry Smith, in his famous *Autobiography*, criticizes severely Gough's repeated frontal

¹ A brilliant defence of him has been made by Professor Rait in his *Life of Lord Gough*, 2 vols., 1903.

² Except perhaps some of the Mahratta battalions, which we met at Laswarree and Assaye, long after their gallant French creator, de Boigne, had gone home.

attacks on strong positions ; and certainly at Aliwal, won by him, Smith, over the northern wing of the Khalsa, on January 6th, 1846, he exemplified those fine turning movements which he held to be the essence of the Duke's Peninsular tactics.¹ Gough's victory at Sobraon, on February 10th, 1846, whereat the Sepoys more than recovered their honour, completed the war and drove the Sikhs with heavy loss across the Sutlej. Not a shot was fired during our subsequent march upon Lahore.

The first Treaty was signed in March 1846. The Sikh army was to be disbanded, but reorganized with British help ; all guns which had been used against us were to be surrendered. Two cessions of territory were exacted, one a strip between the rivers Sutlej and Beas, called the Jullundhur Doab, to the Company, the other, Cashmere, to a Sikh officer who had refused to join the Khalsa against us.² Runjeet's youngest son, Dhuleep Singh, aged eight, was recognized as ruler in Lahore, with a Sikh council of regency under Henry Lawrence, while Henry's brother John was to administer the ceded strip of Jullundhur. British troops were to occupy Lahore till the end of 1846. A later Treaty of December extended the period of occupation, at the request of the regency, to eight years. Hardinge did little beyond this, but it was he who first promoted the two Lawrence brothers to high place, he also who began the enlistment of Sikhs in our Bengal army. Economic pressure was then compelling him to cut down each battalion of the three Presidential armies by two hundred—a total disbandment of some fifty thousand men. Hardinge and Gough were rewarded with peerages, and the former sailed for home, after receiving his successor, Lord Dalhousie, in January 1848. On the same ship sailed Sir Henry Lawrence on sick leave, his brother John taking his place at Lahore.

Perhaps Hardinge had been wrong to leave the Sikh Government in such comparative independence, but it was

¹ Smith thought that Waterloo, 'as a stand-up fight between two pugilists', had led us to forget the lessons of the Peninsular War.

² He afterwards sent 2,000 Cashmerees to help us in the Mutiny.

a mistake on the right side, and he firmly believed that he had bequeathed a long period of peace to India. Yet he had barely reached home before, in April 1848, two British officers, a soldier and a civilian, were murdered at the fortress of Mooltan, which commands all the middle valley of the Indus. Their murderer, a Sikh called Moolraj, then proclaimed a holy war, and within a few months nearly all the Khalsa responded to his call. Though there were troops within two hundred miles, enough to have nipped the rising in the bud, it fell to young Herbert Edwardes, who was only eighty miles away, to scratch together a few hundred Pathans, drive Moolraj back into Mooltan, and hold him fast there for five months, before Lord Gough, who dreaded a hot-weather campaign, could send anything serious to help him. Even then (September) the first relief sent could effect nothing, and the siege of Mooltan had to be abandoned until December. This fatal delay gave ample time for the Khalsa to gather and to strengthen itself. The new Governor-General was no soldier, but he was a born 'organizer of victory', and at the end of the year he took charge. Gough had 38,000 men and 70 guns when he fought the Sikhs in January 1849 at the terrible battle of Chillianwallah. The tactics Gough employed, whether we consider the battle drawn, won, or lost, were universally condemned, and, when the news reached home, Sir Charles Napier was at once sent to supersede him. Gough, however, happily for his reputation, had already avenged himself in the complete victory of Goojerat before Napier's arrival. At that battle we had 24,000 against 40,000 Sikhs, numbers more nearly equal than in any of our previous Indian combats, and this of itself shows what worthy foes the Sikhs were. Their army was destroyed in the field and in the flight which, by Dalhousie's orders, was pursued right up to the mountain wall. The survivors laid down their arms at Rawul-Pindee. Even the hated Afghans had been welcomed by the Khalsa as allies, and Dost had sent troops to aid his oldest foes. These, too, after Goojerat, fled pell-mell through the Khyber, abandoning Peshawur to our victorious army. Dalhousie

saw that he must make a full end of the independence of the Punjaub.

It is a strange coincidence that the three greatest men whom Britain sent to govern India, Warren Hastings, Wellesley, and Dalhousie, were all of slight stature. Mr. Muir compares the three as follows: 'Dalhousie was greater than Wellesley because he took a far deeper view of the problems of government, lesser than Hastings because he lacked Hastings's generous humanity, his power of reading the minds of his colleagues, and of understanding the point of view of the millions whom he laboured to serve.' He speaks of Dalhousie's 'ferocious logicity of mind' as the result of his Scottish blood and training. Yet we must beware of regarding Dalhousie as a rigid 'uniformitarian'. No doubt he would have liked to extend our control, on a uniform plan, over the whole peninsula, but several things prove that he could deviate from this view, and first and foremost was his handling of the conquered Punjaub. Secondly, in the application of the doctrine of 'lapse', he drew a distinction between independent and dependent Native States. Thirdly, though objecting to puppet kings on principle, he wished to leave a puppet king in Oude. Yet Mr. Muir is surely more right than Dalhousie's unstinted panegyrist, Sir W. W. Hunter, when he says that the Governor-General 'actually disturbed and unsettled the minds of all his subjects by the very benefits which he conferred upon them'. Moreover, his application of 'lapse' gave severe shocks, not only to Hindoo prejudice but to well-recognized custom also. In plain English, Dalhousie frightened every one.

He wished to have no more 'dependent States with nerveless governments half-controlled by English Residents', and, although here the weight of opinion was against him, there were ample reasons for each successive step that he took to supersede them. Nay, there were ample reasons for every one of his acts. The 'Western mind' was, however, marching at an unprecedented pace, while the Eastern mind still lay bound in the swaddling-bands of immemorial custom. Dalhousie, if he spared none of his subordinates,

spared himself less than any one. Sir Henry Cunningham speaks of his 'superhuman efficiency'.¹ He was a vigorous young man of thirty-six when he arrived, a broken-down old man of forty-four when he left, and he died at forty-nine. He saw everything with his own eyes, and travelled incessantly over his whole dominions. He made the present North-West frontier; indeed, he made the modern map of India. The modern financial, the modern commercial systems are his. He lighted the coasts, he deepened the harbours. He left 4,000 miles of telegraph lines—lines constructed, in the teeth of amazing difficulties, almost wholly by amateurs—and it was the telegraph that saved us in the Mutiny. He opened the East India Railway in 1853, and within four years it had reached Raneegunge, 120 miles from Calcutta.² He completed the Ganges Canal. He established a uniform letter-postage, cheaper than the English, from end to end of India. He fostered the humblest of the Native schools, linking them up with the Government schools, in a ladder towards University education, and the three Presidential Universities were founded within a year of his departure.³ Within his eight years he saw Indian exports nearly doubled, and imports more than doubled, and, though he spent five millions more in his last year than in his first, he left a surplus of two and a half millions.

True, while Charles Napier, Ellenborough, and Henry Lawrence (to name only three persons) had predicted the coming trouble, Dalhousie made light of the notion of

¹ *Life of Canning*, Rulers Series, 10.

² He had been Peel's right hand at the Board of Trade during the Railway Mania of 1845-6, and was an expert on this subject.

³ This was in consequence of Sir Charles Wood's Dispatch of 1854, following on an investigation by Committees of both Houses of Parliament of the question of Indian Education. Unfortunately the Universities became mere 'examining bodies', and the schools came to prepare students merely for their examinations. The Natives look upon education merely as a means of obtaining posts in Government service. And in spite of two Commissions of Reform (1882, 1902), the recent Commission of 1917-19 has to confess that 'the foundation of a sound University organization has not yet been laid'. (*Calcutta Report*, i. 77.)

a Sepoy Mutiny, and, after Hardinge's reduction, he again increased the strength of the Native battalions. But he laboured to distribute those battalions in careful relation to the stations of British troops. He enlisted Ghoorkhas and Sikhs in large numbers, he created the Punjaubee Irregular Force and the Punjaubee Military Police; he pleaded incessantly for more British battalions, and it was not his fault that two regiments were taken away from India for the Crimean War. He moved the head-quarters of the Bengal army to Meerut, a thousand miles from Calcutta.¹ He never sought war, but, when it came, he met it with a care and an energy seldom displayed by any Government before or after his time.

Of this care, the Second Burmese War in 1852 was a striking example. The King of Ava, who had tardily submitted in 1826, lost his throne eleven years later, and then our merchants at Rangoon were plundered, and our frontiers were again exposed to raids. Our agent had to be withdrawn in 1840. In 1851 Dalhousie received a petition from Rangoon setting forth the utter insecurity of person or property there, and though some of the pecuniary claims were extravagant, all redress was refused, and war had to follow. Dalhousie knew that the climate was more dangerous than the enemy's guns, and so, for the first time in history, a British force was suitably clothed and equipped for its task. The capture of the fortified Pagoda at Rangoon was a great feat of arms, and, when we had penetrated as far as Prome without receiving any submission, Dalhousie ignored the Court of Ava altogether (December 1852) and simply took possession of the province of Pegoo or Lower Burma.²

With regard to the famous question of lapse, Hindoo religious custom required that a man who was childless should adopt an heir. Dalhousie upheld the succession of the adopted heir to all the personal property of the deceased, but not to the sovereignty of those States which had been created by us, were dependent on us, or were not 'of ancient

¹ In 1865 it was moved to Simla.

² Upper Burma was added after our period, in 1885.

foundation'. Dalhousie's first application of this doctrine¹ was in 1848, to the Mahratta State of Sattara, created in 1818 by Lord Hastings, out of the forfeited Peishwaship of Poonah, in favour of a descendant of the first great Mahratta, Sivajee. Dalhousie undoubtedly looked upon the principle, that a State without a born heir should lapse to the Paramount Power, as a means of incorporating badly-governed Native States in the Company's dominions. In Sattara there was no complaint of bad government against the last Rajah, and the 'lapse' therefore spread fear among all Native rulers. Two other instances of alleged hardship were the subsequent annexations, under the same doctrine, of the States of Jhansee² and Nagpore. Nagpore, however, can hardly be quoted against Dalhousie, because the last of its Bhonslas, shocking ruler as he had proved himself, expressly refused to adopt an heir, preferring, perhaps in a fit of repentance, that his subjects should pass under the rule of the Company. Still less can Dalhousie be questioned for his refusal to continue to Nana Sahib, adopted heir of the long-ago expropriated Peishwah, Baji Rao, the pension of £80,000 a year granted (for life only) in 1818. The Nana had inherited the enormous private fortune of Baji, as well as the landed estate of Bithoor near Cawnpore. But the fact remained that the ex-Queen of Jhansee and the Nana became, in consequence of these resumptions, our two bitterest foes in the Mutiny.

Dalhousie expressly refused to consider, although Hardinge had considered, the extension of the doctrine of lapse to those so-called Independent Native States which we controlled by treaties. Moreover, when, in 1853, Sir Henry Lawrence, as Commissioner in Rajpootana, found all the eighteen Rajpoot States seriously alarmed by the prospect of lapses, Dalhousie authorized him to promise that under

¹ Both Bentinck and Auckland had applied the doctrine to small States.

² The lapse of Jhansee was in 1853, and a large pension was granted to the widow. There were also minor cases in which lapse was enforced during Dalhousie's rule.

no circumstances should the doctrine be extended to such ancient States as these. The annexation of the great province of Berar from the Nizam of Hyderabad, in satisfaction of a debt long due from that helpless prince, is more questionable, though it was less questioned at the time. The most famous and the most sharply controverted of all Dalhousie's additions to British territory is, however, that of Oude. Yet, in this annexation above all his others, it is perfectly clear that the grossest misrule was replaced by good government, that the poor gained, and the rich lost; and this last exchange is usually held, by those who profess to believe in democracy, to excuse any crime.

Oude was in a peculiar position. First, you may say that, geographically, it cut the Company's territory in half. Secondly, its King had repeatedly come to the financial assistance of the Company, and had been steadily loyal, since Wellesley had taken away half his territory in return for having saved the other half from the Afghans. Thirdly, it was the chief recruiting ground for our Bengal army. Fourthly, Lucknow, its capital, was the second city in India. Lastly, it had been for half a century in the most atrocious state of anarchy. The Company had more than once been on the point of annexing it, in the mere interests of humanity. Successive Governors-General, from Bentinck's time, had told the King that, if he did not behave himself better, we should withdraw the small British force which alone protected him from his own outraged subjects. This was perfectly true; British bayonets ought not to uphold a Government 'swayed by harlots, fiddlers, and eunuchs'. Auckland, while scolding the King severely, had, by some perversion of vision, withheld from his knowledge the Company's recent threat of annexation. Hardinge, the least aggressive of rulers, had given him two years to amend or go. Heber had described ¹ the condition of Oude in 1824, 'Every one carries arms, all the villages are walled, no one pays any attention to the King's orders, his treasure is frequently robbed on the high road'. It is believed that,

¹ *Narrative*, i. 207.

in the years immediately preceding the annexation, two thousand persons were annually killed by brigands. In 1851 Sleeman, in 1854 Outram, both ardent champions of Native States, had declared the impossibility of tolerating the Oude Government any longer. Yet even after these reports, Dalhousie, while taking over the whole administration of the kingdom, wished to keep the King. This the Directors forbade, and almost his last acts (Feb. 13, 1856), before sailing, were the deposition of the King (who was sent, a State pensioner, to Calcutta, and bought a fine house at Garden Reach), and the annexation of Oude.

Outram was appointed its first Commissioner, but had almost immediately to go to Europe on sick-leave, and thence to the command in the Persian War. In March 1857, Sir Henry Lawrence, on the eve of the Mutiny, arrived at Lucknow. Sleeman, Outram, and Lawrence had all been with Dalhousie against the Directors, and Lawrence had also pleaded that the Company's revenue ought not to reap one penny from the annexation. The Directors, however, demanded that the new possession should be made to pay, and Dalhousie had insisted that, in the new assessment of land-revenue (which had to be undertaken at once), strict inquiries into title must be made. The result was that the *Talookdars*, i. e. the large landowners (there were nearly three hundred of them), few of whom had good titles to show, suffered real injustice. This was utterly against the wish of such men as Lawrence and Sleeman; and it was in Oude, and there alone, that this class threw in its lot voluntarily with the mutinous Sepoys. Meanwhile, some 50,000 soldiers, pensioners, and dependants of the late King, were turned loose, and there were endless claims to compensation, few of which had been settled in 1857.

We may fairly assume, then, that at least a decade of good Lawrentian administration would have been needed to cleanse the Augean stables and evil-spirit-haunted jungles of Oude. And, if we wish to see Dalhousie at his best, we must turn our eyes to his swift pacification of the Punjaub. For this he swept together a band of such workers as even

British India has not often produced, and he inspired them all with his own spirit of devotion to work. As he reviewed all details of government, there was much conflict of will with strong will, especially between him and Henry, if less between him and John, Lawrence; but in every instance the Governor-General won. The Punjaub was to be a 'non-regulation province', i. e. the administrators were not to be bound by rigid rules; they were to draw up a rough code of equity, broadly based on local custom, and each Commissioner in his district was to exercise all the functions of government. At the head of all was a triumvirate, the two Lawrences and Charles Mansel, at Lahore, and this lasted until the end of 1852. The board was then dissolved, and John Lawrence was left in sole charge of the Punjaub, Henry taking over Rajpootana. 'Jan Larin's' was not a military or despotic government, such as Napier had been allowed to establish in Scinde; the guardianship of the frontier, the distribution of both the irregular and regular forces, that of the huge body of military police, were all subject to civilian control. In taking over the Punjaub, we had succeeded to a long-standing frontier-quarrel with Afghanistan and its wild border tribes. So Dalhousie drove the Grand Trunk road up to the mouth of the Khyber (where the third brother, George Lawrence, was in charge at Peshawur), and built forts and cantonments along the mountain-wall. Herbert Edwardes, the hero of Mooltan, negotiated at the beginning of 1857 a fresh treaty with Dost Mohammed, ensuring the safety of Peshawur from the Afghan side. The result of all the Dalhousian policy in the Punjaub was that John Lawrence was able, during the Mutiny, to strip his province of half its troops, and to send thousands of men to help in the reduction of Delhi.

This name reminds us, before we finally part from Dalhousie, of one fatal mistake that he made, both against his judgement and his natural bent. In his first year of office he had intended to remove the aged Bahadur Shah, the last puppet Great Mogul, from Delhi. But he was over-persuaded, and in 1851 he promised to leave the old man to die a king.

Wellesley, indeed, had had serious thoughts of deposing the Great Mogul of his days when we first took and occupied Delhi. Yet, *magni nominis umbra*, the peacock throne¹ remained, and remained the only conceivable rallying-point for the Mutineers of 1857. It remained, moreover, in a city recently refortified by British hands until it became almost impregnable to the sons of the very men who had strengthened it. No British troops were within the walls, and the huge magazine was guarded by Sepoy battalions with a handful of British officers and civil servants.

So we approach the fateful year 1857. In March 1856 Dalhousie went home to die, and was succeeded by Charles, Lord Canning, second son of the famous George Canning. The new Governor-General was shy and scrupulous to a fault, one who would weigh every jot and tittle of evidence, one who shrank from those crisp decisions, the making of which had been his predecessor's strength, one not quick to estimate the ability of his fellow labourers. Yet Canning was to show himself a noble character, brave under misfortune and misrepresentation, merciful and wise when the tiger was lying wounded to death.

No better story of the Mutiny, and few better analyses of its causes, can be found than in Lord Roberts's *Forty-one Years in India*. The justice, the humanity, and the modesty of the writer are stamped on every page. Few men have so perfectly understood the minds, and sympathized with the feelings, of the best classes of Indians.² The 'little Chief',

¹ Heber (*Narrative*, i. 300 sqq.) gives a pitiful account of the misery and squalor and thirst of Delhi, yet of its vast strength; the ruins of older Delhis to the southwards were 'as big as London, Westminster and Southwark together'. Shah Jehan's palace, with its wide moat, 'far surpasses the Kremlin of Moscow in strength', yet inside it was 'filled with swarms of beggars, and amid the ruins of fine mosaic paintings, the work of Italian artists, the throne itself, in the largest audience-hall, is so covered by pigeons' dung that its ornaments are scarcely discernible'.

² 'An old chowkidar said to me the other day, "No Lord Sahib has been like Rabaarts Sahib, Jung-i-lat-Sahib, and if he were only here now troubles would cease".' (Extract from a letter from India, 1922.)

who won his Victoria Cross in the Mutiny, as it were for an afternoon's sport, will surely be remembered hereafter (if our new masters allow us to remember anything except economic questions) as one of the noblest and most knightly of British soldiers.

What, then, were the causes of the outbreak? ¹ or rather, what *was* the Mutiny itself? For it was neither a nationalist rising, nor a religious rising, though there were elements of both these in it. Nor was it a general conspiracy of soldiers. It was, rather, a series of small military mutinies, such as had been too frequent in previous years, spreading rapidly into one great mutiny, rather by contact than from preparation, and acting upon a society which recent changes, and the fear of more changes, had already made highly inflammable; mutinies of troops, of several races and of two mutually hostile faiths, too much trusted by their British officers, and far too loosely disciplined. Panics, a series of quasi-electric panics, were running through the Bengal army.

'All distinctions of religion and caste are going to be abolished by these masterful infidels. How are the gods of India to stand against their fire-carriages and their magic wires? Yet the very builders of these things, leagued as they are with devils, were, only a few years ago, defeated by Afghans, almost defeated by Sikhs, and, in spite of what they say to the contrary, have just been defeated by Russians. All told, we, compared to them, are five to one.² Our countrymen will rise to help us, or, at least, won't help them. This new Lord Sahib allows our widows to marry, allows his priests to preach to us of Bibi Miriam and the prophet Isa—nay, our own Colonels sometimes preach to us of their false gods. He will break our caste by sending us beyond seas.³ Already, since we conquered Scinde and the

¹ The best short *History of the Mutiny* is an early work of that accomplished writer, Dr. T. Rice Holmes, 1883, quoted here in its 5th edition, 1913. In the 'Rulers of India' series, Sir H. Cunningham's *Life of Canning* is one of the best.

² 233,000 Native troops to 45,000 British. The Bengal army was bigger than those of Madras and Bombay put together.

³ Canning had just issued the 'General Service Order' (July 1856),

Punjaub for them, we have to serve all over Hind, without the double pay which we used to get when serving outside the territory of Honourable Kumpani.¹ Soon they will make us march inside their fire-engines. Then, suddenly [in January 1857], we hear that we are to bite cartridges greased with the fat of cows sacred to us, Hindoos, and of pigs abominable to you, Mohammedans.² If we do that, we are outcaste in this world, and inevitably damned in the next.'

Such may reasonably be supposed to be the thoughts of a Sepoy hitherto loyal. Loyalty is deeply ingrained in Eastern races, but for them it is always loyalty to an individual not to a 'concept'. Roberts testifies to the almost universal faithfulness of native servants to their European masters and mistresses; there were hundreds of instances of splendid devotion like that of the old Ressaldar in *Kim*,³ who 'rode seventy miles with a mem-sahib and her babe on his saddle-bow'. But the firmest loyalties of crowds are seldom proof against real panic, and when panic becomes religious the floodgates of savagery are unloosed. The notion that a man, who had lost his caste, could then be forcibly made 'Christian' was widely spread. The story of the new tallow may be true or untrue, but no one had analysed the stuff at either factory, at Meerut or at Calcutta. Roberts⁴ says, 'incredible disregard of the soldiers' religious prejudices was displayed in the making of these cartridges'. It was the Sepoys of the highest caste who would be most deeply touched, men to whom ritual meant everything. On such men it was easy for the Brahmins, clever enough to realize that 'Westernism' was sapping their power, to work. We know now no more than we knew then, to what extent the priests had inflamed fear and anger, nor how far dispossessed princes like the Ranee of Jhansee, Nana Sahib, and the that henceforth no recruits were to be enlisted who would not undertake to serve wherever sent.

¹ Colin Campbell in 1849 only just averted a mutiny at Peshawur on this account.

² In the Bengal army Hindoos, compared to Mohammedans, were as five to one.

³ p. 75.

⁴ i. 431.

great 'barons' of Oude, had also been at work.¹ Perhaps in such a treacherous savage as Nana, hatred was struggling for the mastery with fear. It is quite probable that such people only took advantage of the Mutiny when and where it looked like winning, and nothing is clearer than that the 'upper classes', if we can use such a term amid the welter of races in the Indian peninsula, were almost all on our side, passively if not actively.

The agitation against the cartridges began early in the year at Barrackpore just outside Calcutta, and was marked there and elsewhere by nocturnal arson. There was no actual mutiny, i. e. united refusal to obey orders, till March, and, when that occurred, Canning made two mistakes; he said the abominated cartridges must be used, and he delayed far too long to disband the mutinous battalions. He failed to realize the magnitude of the crisis, even after the news of May 10 reached him from Meerut. Between Meerut and Calcutta were but 5,000 British to 55,000 Native soldiers.

There were then but two great metalled roads in India: the Grand Trunk from Calcutta to Peshawur, via Benares, Cawnpore, Agra, Delhi, Umballa, Lahore, Rawul-Pindee:² and its branch from Agra to Bombay, via Gwalior and Indore. The whole of Oude lay between Delhi and Calcutta, and Oude was to be the real focus of trouble. In peace-time it was over two months' journey from Calcutta to Peshawur (1,500 miles), and the swiftest army cannot move at the pace of the single traveller.

At Meerut was the strongest British force in the North-West Provinces, a regiment of Dragoon Guards, a battalion of the 60th Rifles, and a fairly strong contingent of Artillery. Only three Native battalions were there. These had already given trouble, but it had been put down, and some eighty-five mutinous men had been fettered on parade and sent to jail.

¹ The Nana had certainly sent an agent to Europe to intrigue against Britain; he had paid visits in April '57 to Delhi and Lucknow. Henry Lawrence had seen through him, and had actually warned Sir H. Wheeler at Cawnpore against trusting him.

² Cawnpore is the point of that road nearest to Lucknow, Delhi to Meerut, Umballa to Simla.

The General in command of the station was seventy years old, and lost his head when, on the evening of 10th May, the three Native battalions mutinied, broke open the jail, released their comrades, and, after a few hours of sporadic plunder and murder, during which not a British soldier was ordered to move, hurried off to Delhi forty miles away. Roberts¹ considers that pursuit would have been useless, but the weight of authority is here against him. The telegraph took the news to Umballa, and runners brought it, eighty miles on, to Simla, where George Anson, the Commander-in-Chief, an old Waterloo 'man of fashion', then was. He started at once for Umballa, but there, in spite of the entreaties of John Lawrence at Lahore, he hesitated; there had already been small outbreaks at Lucknow and at Umballa itself. Anson died of cholera at Kurnaul on the way to Delhi (May 25th); Barnard took over the command, and was joined by Archdale Wilson from Meerut. On June 8th they beat, after losing many men, a large force of mutineers at the Ridge which overlooks Delhi from the north. The British officers of the Native regiments in Delhi had almost all been murdered on the arrival of the Meerut mutineers, but Lieutenant Willoughby had been able to blow up the magazine, together with a thousand or two of its assailants.

Then began the so-called siege of Delhi. There could be no investment of such a city by our tiny force, at first less than 3,000 men. Huge reinforcements from the south, regiment after regiment of mutineers, poured into Delhi, each paying as it entered some sort of homage to the helpless old Mogul. This concentration of the enemy was not without advantage to us, although it meant that Barnard and his successors, who held the two and a half miles of 'Ridge' for three months, were themselves far more besieged than besiegers. They had to face both ways, for a suburb behind the Ridge was long held by the enemy. No news could at first be brought, except by spies, nor did Barnard know whether any other British force in India was holding

¹ i. 90.

out. All reinforcements had to fight their way to the camp, and, at first, these barely made up for our daily loss by battle and sickness. Ammunition was woefully short, and there were four guns on the walls for every gun on the Ridge. Until September we had no siege-guns at all. Every suggestion of an immediate storm (and several were made) was met by the obvious answer that, while we were storming the city, our own camp, which was most vulnerable at its western end, would certainly be taken. Barnard, though much beloved, was not a man of resource. He died on July 5th, and was succeeded by Reed. Reed went sick on July 17, and was succeeded by Wilson, one of the Meerut failures; Wilson more than once wished to abandon the siege. But, if the high command was ineffective, the officers and men of the British regiments, of the Ghoorkas, and of the reinforcing Punjaubees and Pathans, more than redeemed such inefficiency. There arrived in succession Neville Chamberlain as Adjutant-General, Baird Smith as Chief Engineer, the fiery John Nicholson, who had once been in an Afghan prison, Donald Stewart, and young Frederick Roberts, who, though only twenty-five, had been taken into the innermost confidence of Nicholson, Sydney Cotton, and Herbert Edwardes at Peshawur, and had helped them to save the Punjaub.¹ All, however, had been delayed, quelling little mutinies, enlisting fresh troops, and gathering guns and stores.

For in spite of all that John Lawrence, watching from Lahore, could do, there was always danger in his huge province. The true Sikhs, little as they cared for the Brahmins of Hindostan, sat on the fence until Delhi had fallen. Luckily, large numbers of Punjaub peasantry were not Sikhs at all, and these took service readily. Lawrence had but twelve British battalions, but he sent half of these and one cavalry regiment to Delhi; he had 36,000 regular Sepoys, 12,000 irregulars, 13,000 military police, and of these he sent seven infantry battalions, three cavalry regiments, one corps of sappers, two siege trains, one

¹ Roberts reached the Ridge on June 29th.

battalion of the famous 'Guides'.¹ The marches made by these men, in an Indian summer, were marvellous; the Guides covered five hundred and sixty-seven miles in three weeks, and fought three hours after they arrived on the Ridge. Yet late in August, when the first siege-train was known to be approaching, Nicholson had to sally from camp and fight a severe action to get it through. Meanwhile, in the country these men had left behind, it was always touch and go. The odds *must* have seemed against Dost's keeping the treaty which he had signed in January. Lahore, Umritsar (a sacred city to the Sikhs), Mooltan, Peshawur, were all trembling in the balance. From Ferozepore one mutinous regiment did escape, and reached Delhi. Till the very end Edwardes had much ado to hold off such hill-tribes as he failed to enlist. Till the very end Lawrence thought he might have to buy Afghan help by surrendering Peshawur to Dost. He even consulted Canning on the point, but Canning bravely said no.

Happily for us, Delhi was full of fierce military and religious quarrels, especially over the emoluments of commands. The Mohammedans killed cows in the streets in order to insult the Hindoos. When at last our heavy batteries could be got in position, the battlements began to crumble, and, when at last Wilson made up his mind to risk a storm, we had, fit for action,² about 8,000 men (of whom one-third were British), although nearly half of these had to be left to protect the camp. Inside, the Sepoys had grown, from 7,000 in May, to nearly 30,000. On September 14th the assault was delivered by four columns, each at a separate gate or bastion. To get in at all was a terrible task, to penetrate the city even more terrible. The rebels rallied in the southern quarters of it, and our detachments constantly lost their way. Nicholson was mortally wounded on the first day. Not until the sixth

¹ The Guides were first raised by (Sir) Harry Lumsden in 1846 from the fierce hill-tribes of the North-West frontier, and had done admirable service in the Sikh wars.

² About 3,000 were in hospital-tents.

day, September 20, was the whole city completely in our hands, the Mogul's fortified palace being the last place to fall. Three of the regiments engaged in the storm lost over half their strength. Our total loss during the siege was nearly 1,000 killed, and nearly 3,000 wounded, while no figures can be given of those who died of disease, or were permanently injured in health.

The fall of Delhi produced a great effect in India; there would henceforth be no need to fear for Lahore or Peshawur. But all Oude and nearly all the North-West Provinces were now aflame. John Colvin, Chief Commissioner at Agra, a most highly esteemed official, proved himself unequal to his task. He hesitated to disarm suspected regiments, and, in such circumstances, hesitation spelt ruin. He had a British regiment at his disposal, but, instead of taking the field with it, he hurried it and five thousand more Europeans (many of them fugitives from outlying stations) into the fort at Agra, and sat down to await a siege which never came till Delhi had fallen. Outside all was anarchy, though by no means all Native regiments joined the mutineers. Some simply melted away, from others men deserted and went home to protect their families. And not without reason, for every scoundrel in India was hastening to pay off old scores: Hindoos and Mohammedans were killing each other, debtors killing creditors, *thugs* and *dacoits* lifting their heads again. Scindia at Gwalior remained loyal, but his army, 25,000 strong, mutinied. Holkar at Indore said he was loyal too, and his troops also mutinied. The Rajpoot princes were, thanks to George Lawrence, who succeeded his brother Henry as Commissioner in Rajpootana, quite loyal. And so successful had been Bartle Frere's rule in Scinde that he was not only able to strip his province bare of European troops, but to raise new and loyal Native regiments, which he sent to help Lawrence in the Punjab.

On the lower Ganges there were, for the first three weeks after Meerut, large bands of mutineers roaming about almost unchecked. Had they thrown up any leader they might have cut our main line of communications, or taken Calcutta

itself. But early in June reinforcements came by sea from Madras, and General Neill was hurrying them up country, and securing Benares and Allahabad. There were several panics at Calcutta, and Canning was abused for refusing to enrol civilian volunteers for its defence, for gagging the English as well as the Native press, and, later, for prohibiting both Englishmen and Natives from carrying arms without a licence. He refused to take any step savouring of panic. On June 15, however, he arrested the ex-King of Oude, who was a centre of intrigue, and on the 17th he¹ appointed Henry Havelock to command the first relief column for the North-West. Havelock, sixty-two years of age, a scientific student of war, and of grim Baptist faith, had just returned from the Persian War. Outram, coming from the same war, landed on August 1st. Sir Colin Campbell, who was to be Commander-in-Chief, landed twelve days later. Havelock's appointed task was the relief of Cawnpore and Lucknow, and he would have to fight every inch of his way after Allahabad.

Cawnpore on the Ganges is about a hundred and forty miles up-stream from that city: Lucknow, on the Goomtee, is forty-two miles north-east of Cawnpore. Nana Sahib's house at Bithoor was a few miles above Cawnpore, by whose tiny garrison² and large civilian establishment he had been accepted as a trusty friend. Sir Hugh Wheeler, a fine old soldier, was in command. There were about four hundred Englishmen, and about as many women and children. Wheeler made two great mistakes; he left the large and strong magazine, into which he might have withdrawn all the Europeans, in Native hands, and he threw up a feeble defensive work close to the Native lines. On June 4 the Native troops rose and besought the too willing Nana to join them. They did not attack the English, and had

¹ Or rather Patrick Grant, temporary Commander-in-Chief.

² I always fear to quote figures. Dr. Holmes (222, sqq.) gives them fifty-nine British artillerymen and some invalids, to four Native regiments. Lawrence had sent fifty more men and half a battery from Lucknow, but Wheeler, over-confident, had sent them back again.

actually started for Delhi when Nana, who meant to carve out a kingdom for himself, persuaded them to return. This was just what a Mahratta would do, and it was dissension of this kind that ruined the mutineers. Nana fell at once upon Wheeler's slight defences, and for the next three weeks the sufferings of the Europeans were terrible. On June 27 they capitulated, accepting a safe-conduct by water to Allahabad. No sooner were they embarked in boats than Tantia Topee,¹ Nana's lieutenant, began to massacre them from the banks, and only four men escaped. The surviving women and children were taken back to Cawnpore, confined and treated as slaves for a fortnight, and then cut to pieces by Nana's orders when Havelock was known to be close at hand. The bodies, some still living, were flung down a well, July 14th.

Havelock had picked up Neill at Allahabad, and had started thence with less than 1,100 British (among whom were some fine 78th Highlanders) on July 7. He fought four battles before he reached Cawnpore, each battle and each march diminishing his tiny force a little. The Nana made a good stand on July 16th, but was finally swept away and fled north-westwards. Havelock was obliged to leave three hundred men at Cawnpore, but he pushed bravely on into Oude, resistance growing stiffer as he marched.

At Lucknow there was no fort and no fortified magazine. It was a vast city, swarming with all the offscourings of half a century of anarchy, surrounded for miles by suburbs full of huge walled gardens and palaces, and covered on three sides by a big river and a canal. There had been sporadic outbreaks in the neighbourhood before May, and Lawrence's first task had been to put down one of these, led by a fanatical Moolvee at Fyzabad. There was one British regiment (the 32nd) in barracks some distance from the Residency. In 1824 Heber² had divined the peril of the Residency in the face of such a populace as that of Lucknow. It was, however, a large building, and the total

¹ Tantia was a Brahmin who had been an officer in Scindia's army.

² *Narrative*, i. 213.

defended area, with its outbuildings, although overlooked from many places, was nearly a mile in circumference. Henry Lawrence was now fifty years of age, and was adored by everybody. Fourteen years before he had foretold the Mutiny, its two centres, and its probable course.¹ On the news of Meerut, Canning had sent him plenary powers, both civil and military, to act in Oude. On July 22 the Directors at home, still ignorant of his death, chose him as provisional Governor-General in the event of Canning's death or resignation.

Lawrence had already begun to strengthen and victual the Residency, and had removed all Europeans thither. Even then he hesitated to disarm the Native troops, and it was only done during his temporary illness by his subordinate, Gubbins.² Nevertheless, on May 30 these mutinied and there was a rising in the city on the same day. Yet for a month there was no attack on the Residency, and the first attack only followed a sally of Lawrence's, made against a large rebel force coming from Cawnpore. Lawrence had seven hundred men, half of them British, with him; he got as far as Chinhut, and was there driven back with a loss of 115 British (June 29th). The siege began at once. Lawrence was mortally wounded on July 2, and John Inglis, a veteran of the Sikh wars, henceforth conducted the defence of the Residency.

'Never surrender' had been Lawrence's dying words, and he had thought fourteen days would see the end. Inglis had a little over 600 British soldiers, some 400 armed civilians, and 700 loyal Native infantry. Yet how loyal? And would Havelock, of whose advance gallant spies occasionally brought reports, be in time? Would our rations hold out?³ Though the buildings were evidently not such as could easily be stormed, and though every

¹ In the *Calcutta Review*, 1843 (Roberts, i. 349). See also Innes, *Life of H. Lawrence*, in *Rulers Series*, 144, where long extracts are given.

² Lawrence feared that disarmament would precipitate the revolt of all Oude; but all Oude did rise, and would have risen whatever he did.

³ The garrison actually suffered because Inglis under-estimated the quantity of food in store.

attempt at storm was beaten off, their walls could not keep out shells nor always bullets. The worst dangers were from mining and 'sniping', but the rebels found that two could play at those games. Tennyson's fine poem (1880) is almost a journal of the siege, and is frequently confirmed by Lady Inglis's Diary.¹

Havelock had no cavalry to speak of, and three times, even after successes, he was obliged to fall back to Cawnpore; he might conceivably have to fall back to Allahabad. When at last Outram brought a reinforcement of 2,000 men, Havelock had barely 900 left. Then, however, he could advance without intermittent retreats, Outram nobly demanding, despite his own seniority, to serve under Havelock. Yet it was a painfully slow process; Lucknow heard their guns on September 22nd, and only after three days of desperate fighting, through gardens and suburbs, could they throw relief into the Residency (September 25). In five days they had lost 535 men, and they could face neither the task of attacking the city nor of escorting the women and children to safety. All they could do was to remain and aid Inglis in his defence. He, indeed, had far exceeded all Lawrence's hopes; he had held the post for eighty-seven days. Of British troops he had lost 64 in action, 259 by disease. Eight weeks of anxiety still lay before the reinforced garrison, though Sir Colin Campbell with a fresh army was known to be on his way. The Delhi force, the news of whose success Havelock brought with him, might also send relief. Yet the rebels at Lucknow had been vastly strengthened by those who had escaped from Delhi.

The relieving column from that place, dispatched for Cawnpore on 21st September, was diverted to Agra by loud cries for help. Its commander, Greathed, found, on arrival, that Agra was not, and never had been, in serious danger, and he severely thrashed a large rebel force that lay near it. Yet he was then unable to leave its panic-stricken garrison until October 14th. By the 31st he was through Cawnpore and on the road to Lucknow.

¹ *The Siege of Lucknow: a Diary*, 1892.

While Outram, Havelock, and Inglis could do little beyond holding the Residency at Lucknow, Sir Colin's line of communications, when he advanced, was in danger all the way from Allahabad, and most of all at Cawnpore, near which were lying, not only the Nana's troops, much strengthened since July, but also the large Mahratta force from Gwalior, in revolt against the loyal Scindia. Sir Colin therefore left at Cawnpore a detachment of 1,700 (500 British) under General Windham, of Redan fame, with strict instructions to remain on the defensive.

Sir Colin was now seventy years of age and had served everywhere. He was probably the greatest living British soldier. He was accused at the time of some slowness, of some unwillingness to take risks; but he meant to be 'thorough', and he was thorough. He was not able to leave Calcutta in person till the end of October, and he had barely 4,000 men with him when he reached the outskirts of Lucknow. Among these were his own darlings, the 93rd Highland Regiment. Roberts, who was with Grant,¹ tells admirably the story of the great fight into the Residency, November 12th-17th; we lost 45 officers and nearly 500 men in the approach. The storm of the fortress called Sikandurbagh ('Alexander's² garden-house') was the greatest feat of all. Roberts was one of the first to fight his way through to where Outram and Havelock were standing; their first interview with Sir Colin took place under a heavy fire. They pressed the old man to fall on the city at once; undoubtedly, says Roberts, he was right to refuse. The removal of the women and children, and of the war-tired garrison, was the first consideration, the security of Cawnpore the second. The last troops left the Residency on the 22nd; Havelock died, worn out, the next day, and on the 27th the return to Cawnpore began.

They found that Windham had disobeyed his orders, had

¹ i. 299-344. Hope Grant took over Greathed's command between Cawnpore and Lucknow, and Sir Colin picked them up on his way.

² All Northern India is full of memories of Alexander the Great, real or imaginary, but Alexander never crossed the Sutlej.

moved out of his lines, attacked the rebels, lost the city, and been nearly overwhelmed by Tantia Topee, the only general of any skill whom the rebels produced. Windham was barely holding his own entrenchments and had already lost heavily. Sir Colin had to retrieve a difficult situation; he contrived to send the women and children, rescued from Lucknow, safely to Allahabad, and then he fell on Tantia (December 6) and won a complete victory. Yet now, as throughout the war, large numbers escaped simply because we had too few cavalry for pursuit, although something like mounted infantry would have been an even better arm for the ensuing jungle warfare. After his victory Sir Colin took his stand at Futteeghur, a central position on the Ganges, and waited for reinforcements. He had left Outram established in fair strength in the Alumbagh outside Lucknow, and there Outram stayed, gradually extending his works, all through the late winter.

Meanwhile British troops were being poured into India,¹ though lack of transport kept on delaying their appearance at the front. Sir Colin, however, had 30,000 men, including 28 cavalry squadrons, and 134 guns, when he finally took the field in March. Roberts² criticizes his strategy as over-slow, over-methodical. Even when Lucknow city fell, on March 21, many rebels were allowed to escape into the jungles of Oude, owing to a bad mistake of a brigadier; 'it cost a year's campaign and thousands of British lives.' The prolongation of the war may, however, be partially attributed to an ill-judged proclamation of Canning's (against which John Lawrence and Outram protested) confiscating the possessions, with six named exceptions, of the great Oude landowners. And it was a strange mistake for the Governor-General to make, for he had already been sharply criticized from the opposite direction for his famous 'clemency' proclamation of July 31, 1857. In this he had forbidden summary executions, and had drawn a righteous distinction between mutineers and those deserters who,

¹ By the end of April 1858 there were 100,000.

² i. 405-6.

finding their regiments broken up, had simply gone home. When all was over, and the Oude barons had tendered their submission, the policy of the later proclamation was not enforced against them, and they received generous terms.

From the fall of Lucknow the campaign of reconquest became a double one, conducted in Oude and Rohilcund by Sir Colin himself, and in Central India by Sir Hugh Rose, afterwards Lord Strathnairn. Rose's task was to relieve the pressure exercised on Campbell by the large rebel forces south of the Jumna. The hunting down and breaking up of the Oude bands was the more difficult business; Sir Colin had only one big battle, at Bareilly in Rohilcund on May 5, but all was not over till the spring of 1859. Nana Sahib was known to be in hiding somewhere in Oude or Rohilcund, but he was never caught, and his end was never known.¹ Rose, though he had larger armies to face, and though he had no experience of Indian warfare, showed very skilful strategy. Lord Elphinstone, the Governor of Bombay, had kept the whole of his great Presidency quiet, including the independent Mahratta States, though Nana's proclamation of himself as Peishwah on June 30, 1857, did not make this any more easy. Scindia might indeed be loyal, but, when his troops deserted him, he could only fly to British territory. Holkar's loyalty was not above suspicion, but Mhow, head-quarters of the Bombay army, is close to Indore, and Elphinstone held it in force all the time. He also kept the Agra-Bombay road open nearly all the time. Rajpootana never stirred, nor did the South, though there was in Hyderabad a momentary tumult, which the Nizam's Prime Minister, Salar Jung, swiftly blew out. Rose's plan was to move from Mhow towards the Jumna and converge with a column of Madras troops coming from Jubbulpore on the Neerbudda; these last failed him, and he had to strike alone. Early in 1858 he fought his way towards Jhansee, a little State with a mighty fortress, on the edge of Bundelcund. Dalhousie had declared its lapse, but its Ranee, the nearest thing to

¹ See the note in Holmes, 534.

a hero (a ferocious one) that the Mutiny produced, armed herself and defended it with high courage. At the beginning of April Tantia Topee advanced to her aid with 20,000 men. Rose beat him off with his left hand, and stormed the fortress with his right. The Ranee fled and Rose pressed on northwards, beating Tantia again on May 1st. Then the indefatigable pair turned, seized Gwalior, and tried to organize a wholesale Mahratta rising. Rose, however, was too swift for them, defeating them utterly on June 17 and 18th; the Ranee was killed fighting at the head of her troops. Gwalior fell at once, and, after a weary ten months' pursuit, conducted by Robert Napier, the slippery eel Tantia was caught and hanged in April 1859. The Mutiny was at an end.

I have dealt elsewhere with the transference of the Government from the Company to the Crown, and have even ventured to question its wisdom. Yet the Act of 1858, by which the shareholders of the East India Company were bought out, merely completed a process, begun in 1784, with the creation of the Board of Control (itself subject to the British Parliament), continued by the Acts of 1813 and 1833, limiting and then abolishing the Company's trading status, and by that of 1853, which left to the Crown the nomination of one-third of the Directors. No doubt the dual government had often led to friction, and always to delay. Yet, when all arguments are exhausted, the Crown means Parliament, and while even pre-Reform Bill Houses did not show themselves particularly fit, every later decade has proved reformed Parliaments to be less and less fit, for the government of a great Dependency.

Proclamation of the change was made in India (somewhat prematurely) on November 1st, 1858. All existing treaties with Native States were confirmed. All who had not been directly concerned in murders of Europeans were admitted to pardon for their lives, but only for their lives if they had fomented rebellion or sheltered murderers. All other rebels, even if still in arms, were to be fully pardoned if they surrendered within two months. The last Mogul

was sent, a State prisoner, to Burma. The right of adoption was extended (but not retrospectively) to cover sovereignty as well as property, and thus Dalhousie's error, if it were an error, was undone. The relative number of British troops to Native was adjusted by a large increase of the former, a decrease of the latter, and the 'Queen's troops' were amalgamated with the Company's European troops (not without discontent and almost mutiny of the latter) into a new 'Indian Army'. The Governor-General's Council became a kind of Cabinet, and he himself was henceforth to be styled 'Viceroy'. The substitution, on January 1st, 1877, of the title of Empress of India for that of Queen made no difference to these arrangements.¹ Canning, who had lost his wife in 1861, surrendered his office to Lord Elgin in the following March, and went home to die in June—a year older than Dalhousie.

The changed conditions of British India were fully exemplified during the peaceful Viceroyalties of Elgin, 1862-3, Lawrence, 1864-9, Mayo, 1869-72, Northbrook, 1872-6. Under the system of Free-trade India became a great exporter of food-stuffs, her production of which nearly doubled in fifty years, as her market widened. She began also to import machinery and to set up cotton-mills, even to enter upon a rivalry with Lancashire,² to become a 'rich' instead of a 'poor' country. Moreover, it was not only a material change. Down to Dalhousie's time at least, many of our best officials had expected that, at some not distant date, all India would fall under a uniform rule, modelled, more or less, upon European principles of 'progress'; that everything would be done for the 'people', and that they would be our support against Rajahs and Princes, who would gradually disappear. This thoroughly

¹ The Emperor of India is the only monarch in the world who draws not one penny of revenue from his dominions.

² She was ceasing, alas, to produce the beautiful hand-made fabrics of old time, for she found it cheaper to import 'Manchester goods' (which she now tries to exclude), and to pay for them with her rice and her corn. Restrictions of caste hampered, for many years, the development of Indian factories.

'Reform Bill' conception was blown to the winds by the Mutiny, for, though some Princes had 'sat on the fence', few had been actively disloyal. A large majority had been truly loyal, and had resisted much pressure from their subjects; while the 'people', for whom we had wished to do so much, were, as a whole, either hostile or indifferent to our success. Thenceforth, therefore, till the end of our period,¹ while always labouring to ameliorate the condition of the people, we relied more and more upon the co-operation of the Princes, both in domestic reform and in imperial politics. No Viceroy did more towards this than the genial Irishman, Lord Mayo. He made personal friends with Indians of all classes, but especially with the aristocracy. He used to tell them frankly that the one standard by which he would measure them was the good government of their subjects. The foundation of a college at Ajmere for the education of the Rajpoot Princes was one of the most successful of his measures. And, during his short Indian life, he won from these men a personal loyalty such as no ruler before him had won. The unpretending simplicity of Sir John Lawrence (his peerage came after his retirement) had not appealed so much to the Eastern mind. Great man as he was, Lawrence had the best part of his life behind him when he became Viceroy. No man, not even his own idealist brother Henry, not Dalhousie himself, had done more for India (if any *one* man had saved us in the Mutiny it was John Lawrence), but he hardly grasped the changed conditions. Although he was the first Governor since Warren Hastings who could speak Eastern languages fluently, his understanding and his sympathies were more with village communities and Punjaubee farmers than with the haughty Rajpoots or the reconciled *Talookdars* of Oude.

These peaceable years saw great legal changes. The India Councils Act of 1861 gave the Viceroy power to reinforce his ordinary Council and to legislate for the whole peninsula, and created also subordinate Legislative Councils in each Presidency. High Courts of Justice were established in these,

¹ I am not speaking, *bien entendu*, of anything after 1880.

and the codification of Law went steadily on.¹ It was as Legal Member of Council that Sir Henry Maine absorbed that knowledge of primitive peoples, which he so brilliantly gave to the world in his *Ancient Law* and his other great treatises on early Aryan custom.

The same period, especially Mayo's Viceroyalty, saw a great development of railways and of bridge-building; even the treacherous Hooghly was bridged, by (Sir) Bradford Leslie, in 1874.² The railway network, on the whole, followed Dalhousie's original scheme, the Calcutta-Bombay line being opened in 1870. Population increased with every fresh mile of railway, and the need for more and more miles followed such increase. In more primitive times Nature had dealt with this by the positive check of famine, but now the million of lives lost in Lawrence's terrible year of scarcity (1866), in Lower Bengal and Orissa, hardly affected the increase. The remedial and preparatory work done by Lawrence and Mayo, especially the system of reports, by which the slightest failure of crops in any district was at once notified, bore fruit in Northbrook's famine of 1874, when the loss of life was small.³ A worse hindrance to prosperity was the continually recurring deficit in the treasury. The Mutiny had cost fifty millions sterling, and Lawrence was not once able to balance his books. Mayo tackled the situation with his usual thoroughness, and, by keeping in his own hands, not only

¹ The Rule of Law, in the place of arbitrary will, is the greatest blessing that any Government can give its subjects, and, in spite of the enormous difficulties which religious and racial customs have interposed, it has been fully given to India. In some respects our elaborate codes and hierarchy of courts have led to too great formalism, and have encouraged litigation. In dealing with the more primitive strata of Indian society there is much to be said for the swift and rough equity by which the earlier British administrators regulated their decisions.

² By a floating-bridge in that year; by the same engineer's permanent bridge in 1887.

³ In 1876-8 there was a long period of drought and scarcity in the south, and in parts of the west and centre, of the peninsula; and there was again great loss of life, though more from disease than starvation.

(as was customary) the Department of Foreign Affairs, but also that of Public Works, he effected enormous economies. He effected even more by laying down the principle that each province, instead of being allowed to screw the treasury for each of its particular needs, should have a definite sum allotted each year; if its expenditure exceeded that sum it was to expect no relief from the centre. Finally he had the courage to impose a small income-tax, which his weaker successor Northbrook took off. Mayo was thus able to leave a surplus, which was steadily increasing when he was assassinated by a convict in the Andaman Islands in February 1872.

With the exception of a little frontier trouble in 1864 with Bhotan, a half-Thibetan district lying in the curve of the Brahmapootra, and a punitive expedition in 1871 against the Lushai raiders eastward of Chittagong, India enjoyed a decade and a half of peace on all frontiers but one. 'Afghanistan', says Lyall,¹ 'is a foreign kingdom which we have no desire to possess but are imperatively called on to protect.' Perhaps the last clause in this sentence is a *petitio principii*. Yet, the more the means of communication are improved, the more certain are Eastern and Western political conditions to act and react on each other. The Russia of Alexander II was as unquiet a neighbour to us, both in Europe and Asia, as had been that of his father: and, whatever may be Russia's condition to-day, we should not be swift to scold previous generations, which envisaged her as an aggressive power of unknown strength. The men of 1876 were surely right to watch against Russian aggression on India. Whether, in dealing with Afghanistan, they took the right steps towards such watch is another matter.

It was not as a rule so much the Ameer who caused us anxiety as the fierce clans on his eastern frontier, especially in the region of the river Chitral. The Moguls, in the days when all Afghanistan bowed to the throne of Delhi, had failed to subdue these men, whose habits are illustrated in Mr. Kipling's story of *The Lost Legion*. If we had established a real protectorate over Afghanistan we should have been

¹ *British Dominion*, 371.

little better able to deal with them. On a lesser scale there was similar trouble from the Beloochee clans farther south, although it was rather the desire to outflank Afghanistan that took us westwards into their desert in 1876, and led to the establishment of Quetta as a British outpost.

In 1863, on Dost Mohammed's death, there was a rising at the gates of Peshawur itself, and this developed into a regular frontier war, which was barely over when Lawrence succeeded Elgin. There was also immediate civil war for the throne of Cabul and its dependencies. In March 1864 Lawrence recognized Dost's son, Shere Ali, as Ameer, and Shere Ali failed to realize that this did not pledge us to support him against rebellions of his numerous relatives (which never ceased during his rule), nor yet against Russia. What Lawrence would have liked to say, and almost did say, was 'fight it out among yourselves; we will recognize the top-dog when all is over; we may even give him a subsidy in money, but no rifles'. Shere Ali, after many vicissitudes, became top-dog again in Lawrence's last year, and in 1869 paid a State visit to Mayo at Umballa. He then received a large present of cash and a small present of arms, but though he was really anxious to get some definite promise of support in the event of an attack by Russia, we could not give him this while Gladstone was in power at home. And he, for his part, was most unwilling to receive a British agent in Afghanistan. Lord Roberts attributes the change in policy to two letters written home by Sir Bartle Frere in 1874 to Lord Salisbury at the India Office.¹ The Ameer continued to angle for British help against Russia, whose advance since 1868 had been very rapid.² But Northbrook, a Baring and a reasonable Whig, who had held the India Office in Palmerston's time, was a 'Lawrentian', and deprecated any such entanglement. When he found Salisbury leaning the other way he resigned, and was succeeded by Lord Lytton. Lytton, from the moment of his arrival, April 1876, was for the 'forward', anti-Lawrentian, policy, and again demanded that Shere Ali should receive a British agent. This was again refused even

¹ ii. 86.

² *Vid. supra*, p. 346.

when Lytton promised, not only money and arms, but also troops, in the event of a Russian attack.

In pronouncing judgement on what followed we must ask ourselves whether or no the whole question had been altered, since Lawrence's day, by the recent Russian advances through Turkestan. Lawrence, now rapidly ageing at home (his eyesight failed, though he lived till 1879), said it had not, and his word still carried great weight. Yet it is clear that the India Office could not make up its own, or the Prime Minister's, mind. Perhaps with knowledge, perhaps in ignorance, of this, and certainly in wrath at our occupation of Quetta in 1876, the Ameer passed more and more under Russian influence. He sent an envoy to Peshawur early in 1877, and, when that envoy died there, he formally broke with Simla. Lytton prepared for war. Roberts was appointed Commissioner of Peshawur, with command of the frontier force. Then, evidently, came some veto from home against any immediate move, for no further forward step was taken until 1878, when Salisbury had succeeded Derby at the Foreign Office. We expected a Russian war in Europe, and did not wish to be deeply committed in Asia. This fear was over in July 1878.

In that month a Russian mission was openly received at Cabul, and Lytton, with hands now loosed, again insisted, well knowing that he would be refused, that a British mission must also be received there. There came no answer. In September Lytton sent Sir Neville Chamberlain, with a small escort, into the Khyber Pass. An Afghan general politely but firmly ordered it back from Ali Musjid. This could only be followed by war, but even then the Home Government wished to occupy only Candahar (or perhaps only Candahar and Herat), not Cabul. The campaign of that winter—Sir Donald Stewart to Candahar, Sir Frederick Roberts and Sir Samuel Browne to converge on Cabul—was splendidly successful, and Roberts's advance, with the smallest of the three forces, by the fearful route of the Kuram Pass, his storm of the Peiwar-Khotal and the Shutargardan (November and December), were fine pieces of work. Shere Ali fled to

Russian territory and died in exile in the following February (1879). Yakoub Khan seized the throne at Cabul, and Sir Louis Cavagnari, our political agent, then with Browne in the Khyber, was authorized to recognize Yakoub as Ameer, to demand the cession of some frontier posts, and the future control of the foreign policy of Afghanistan. Roberts thought it was madness to negotiate until we had occupied Cabul, or had at least beaten the main Afghan army in some decisive battle. He also early divined that Yakoub was a rogue of no common brand. But the Home Government insisted on treating, and Yakoub signed a treaty at Gundamuck (in the Khyber Pass) on May 8th, 1879, professing to accept all our terms. Our columns fell back from Candahar, and from their advanced posts on the road to Cabul. Cavagnari was received in Cabul in July: in September, in accordance with Lawrence's latest prophecy, he and all his escort were murdered. Roberts had thought him in grave danger from the first.

The murder at once altered the whole situation. It looked like 1841-2 over again. But this time it was in abler military hands, and, till March 1880, in firmer civilian hands. Roberts, who had fallen back to the Kuram, was at once ordered to go straight to Cabul, and at full speed. He brushed aside the hornets that infested the Shutargardan, and, though he had but 4,000 men with him when he arrived at Charasia, he fought and won a great battle there on October 6th, 1879. Yakoub, pretending innocence of the murder, had gone to meet him, perhaps in the hope of delaying his march or of witnessing a disaster. Roberts had to pretend that he believed Yakoub, who, however, got little for his pains and was deported to India at the close of the war. Once in Cabul Roberts took full vengeance on the murderers and demolished the celebrated citadel, the Bala Hissar. He found there written letters, proving Russian intrigues with Shere Ali, and proof that Russian gold had been used to equip Afghan soldiers. In spite of strong reinforcements, and of reserves both in the Khyber and at Peshawur, his position in the winter of 1879-80 was none too comfortable. A still un-

defeated Afghan army lay to the north, and Cabul was full of fanatics. December was a critical month. A rising in the second week compelled Roberts to evacuate the city and to entrench himself at Sherpore outside it. A week later he reoccupied and strengthened his post within the walls. Gradually the disturbance died down, and the next anxiety was for Candahar, which Stewart had reoccupied after the massacre of September.

On March 30, 1880, when Indian statesmen were wondering what would follow Beaconsfield's fall, Stewart left Candahar, and fought his way through Ghuznee to Cabul, which he reached on May 5th. He had left General Primrose in fair strength at Candahar, and by this time it had been decided at home that we should recognize the best claimant we could find to the throne of Cabul and then leave him to take his chance. Fortunately a man was now to hand, Dost's grandson, Abdurrahman. He had been an exile and a pensioner of Russia in Turkestan, and perhaps he had there learned to test the value of Russian promises. He was a very shrewd man, though no one could have known much about him when we decided to recognize him at Cabul.¹ He was proclaimed there on July 22, 1880, and we were preparing for evacuation when news arrived that, on July 27th, a British brigade under General Burrows had been cut to pieces at Maiwand, near Candahar, by another pretender, Ayoub Khan. This put Candahar in danger at once, and Ayoub promptly besieged it. Roberts flew from Cabul to its aid, starting on August 9 with 10,000 men and eighteen mountain-guns. He marched three hundred and thirteen of the worst miles in Asia in twenty-two days, though an attack of fever obliged him to be carried in a *dhoolie* during the last stages. On September 1st, with a loss of only forty men, he utterly defeated Ayoub's large army and took all his guns. 'The march', wrote Beaconsfield, on September 6th, 1880, 'was the march

¹ Lytton wished to disintegrate Afghanistan, holding on to Candahar and ceding Herat to Persia, but Beaconsfield's rule was over too soon for him to press these views; he resigned in April and was succeeded in June by Lord Ripon.

of Xenophon, the victory that of Alexander.'¹ Further relief to Candahar was on its way from Quetta, but Roberts had been too quick to need it.

So confident had Stewart been of his friend's success that he had himself withdrawn from Cabul on August 10th through the Khyber, leaving only one brigade in that pass. Roberts took the whole Candahar force back via Quetta. Whether his advance to Cabul in 1879, or his relief of Candahar in 1880, were the greater feat, students of military history will long dispute. Abdurrahman was left to deal with his rivals, to recover and hold Afghanistan, as best he could—and he certainly used strong measures to attain his success. Lytton's successor, Ripon, a recent convert to Catholicism, was, as Viceroy, at least a class below the best standard, and allowed himself, doubtless with good intentions, to become the tool of those who would apply Gladstonian experiments in 'liberalism' to India. Into the history of these, and of their results, the time-limit of 1880 happily precludes me from venturing. There was a fresh Russian scare in 1885, but Lord Roberts had then just become Commander-in-Chief in India, and, during his seven years' tenure of that office, he made its north-western frontier secure, both in the material and moral senses, as it had never been before. That even this will keep off the 'tiger from the north', when the whole of India is left at the mercy of Jews, Baboos, and Madrassee lawyers, is surely the vainest among the many vain dreams of democracy.

¹ *Beaconsfield*, vi. 590. The old gentleman had forgotten, if indeed he had ever known, that Xenophon's heroism was displayed in the conduct of a Great Retreat.

CHAPTER XII

MISCELLANEA

'HISTORIANS', said Miss Tilney, 'are not happy in their flights of fancy; they display imagination without raising interest.'¹ It is too true, oh peerless Eleanor. We are a dull set of fellows and have but an imperfect understanding of our trade.

Yet, if we only knew how to 'raise interest' in them, the non-political activities of our people, during the sixty-five years which we have been considering, are not unworthy of the attention of modern readers. If we look first at our literature, what broad highways of thought, what bypaths of beauty, what wealth of work, are to be found, between the Regency, with its fine flower of the 'Romantic movement', and the close of the mid-Victorian period! Victoria was born in the last year of the Regency, and in 1880 she had still almost a third of her reign before her. Her name was given to an epoch, to an 'age', and the 'early Victorians' and the 'mid-Victorians' have been alternately lauded to the skies and butchered to make a journalist's holiday. The great Romantics are probably now secure in their several niches of fame, for time creates a perspective, and the standard adopted by posterity, after a century has passed, is not often a false one.² Be that as it may be, the Nineteenth Century made a noble contribution to a National Literature which, if inferior to any, is inferior only to the Greek.

When the period opened, a few shrewd people had begun

¹ *Northanger Abbey*, vol. i, cap. xiv.

² This is not absolutely true: the Eighteenth Century garbled, while venerating, its Shakespeare, and it needed Charles Lamb to interpret him, as well as the other Elizabethans, afresh. Dryden and Pope, on whom the Romantics turned their backs, are not yet wholly rehabilitated.

to guess the name of the author of *Waverley*, which had appeared in 1814.¹ When only *Guy Mannering* and *The Antiquary* had been added, Jane Austen, whose early death was in 1817, declared that no one but Scott could have written them. Her own task was nearly done, but *Emma* came out a few months after Waterloo, *Northanger Abbey* and *Persuasion* after the author's death. Jane's fame is, one supposes, absolutely secure; *Pride and Prejudice*, *Sense and Sensibility*, will be read so long as 'the comedy of manners' interests any readers at all. 'Her art', says Andrew Lang, 'has the exquisite balance and limit of Greek art in the best period. She knew what she could do, and she did it to perfection.'²

Among her warmest admirers was Sir Walter Scott, and he too can never be dethroned. Nay, surely, he sits enthroned as the greatest of the Romantics. There are blotches on his work, caused by too great haste and ease, by indifference to literary fame, and, in his last seven years, by the cruel necessity of writing to retrieve fallen fortunes. The gallant struggle which he made for this end makes him the more lovable as a man. We do not, however, seek the real Sir Walter in anything that followed the amazing splendours of *Redgauntlet* (1824) nor, with the possible exception of *Ivanhoe*, in any novel whose scene is laid outside his native Scotland. Our juniors, fed on the perfect style and the brilliant electric light of Stevenson (who was barely above the horizon when our period closes), are said to prefer it to the pure sunshine which radiates from the best of Scott. The mistake, and the loss, are theirs. Scott was a master of many strings of the harp of romance, and of some of them he was such a master as was never heard before or since. Each of us will have his own favourite among the *Waverley* Novels, or will refuse, with the present writer, to say whether any of those already mentioned is greater than *Old Mortality*, *Rob Roy*, *The Heart of Midlothian*, or *A Legend of Montrose*. Scott died in 1832.

¹ See vol. iv, p. 293.

² *History of English Literature*, 539.

I shall probably be scolded if I find in William Makepeace Thackeray the only writer of prose fiction in our period worthy of the highest honours together with Miss Austen and Sir Walter. Rich in all the elements of true romance, Thackeray is yet poles asunder from the standpoint of the Romantics. Alike in the wonderful *tours de force* of *Esmond* (1852) and *The Virginians* (1859), in his three great novels of modern life, *Vanity Fair* (1848), *Pendennis* (1850), *The Newcomes* (1855), and in a long series of lesser productions, the spirit pervading the scene is a tender disillusionment, an exquisite sense of the irony of Fate. Human nature—so runs his lesson—is the strongest thing in man or woman, and is much the same in the reigns of Queen Anne and Queen Victoria. This was the spirit of the Eighteenth Century come again, yet illuminated by a purer light, a gentler sympathy, than any known to Smollett or Fielding. Thackeray was indeed the

Great master of the human heart,
Its follies, passions, sorrows, sins,
Who showed the world with wondrous art
How near to evil good begins.

Just because of this mastery, his characters, from Beatrix Esmond and Becky Sharpe down to the humblest little servant-girl or the most vapid snob, are perfectly human and natural. And just because the art was, like Miss Austen's, so consummate, he never exaggerated their features. It was a very different matter with the art of Thackeray's far more popular contemporary, Charles Dickens.

Dickens, equally with Thackeray, took his themes from the strata of society with which he had been familiar in his youth. That they were strata less interesting, less agreeable, to well-educated people should not be allowed to detract from the writer's merits. If his pathos is occasionally nauseating, his fun is the most exhilarating thing in the world. Mr. Bumble, Mr. Pecksniff, Mr. Squeers, Sarah Gamp, and the whole series of glorious asses in *Pickwick*, will live for ever. But they will live as over-painted,

exaggerated types, not as real men and women. And that is the true *gravamen* against Dickens. Sam Weller alone of his creations is almost real and perfectly lovable. We must not accuse Dickens of 'writing down to' his enormous public; rather (for we know with what distorted vision he looked at history), we must suppose that he saw his queer, distorted characters as part of the real world. In his worse moments, however, he undoubtedly wanted, like his own Fat Boy, to 'make our flesh creep', and the flesh of half-educated persons creeps, at his delineations of the horrible and the pathetic, even to-day. *Pickwick* was finished in 1837,¹ *Oliver Twist* and *Nicholas Nickleby* in 1839, *The Old Curiosity Shop* and *Barnaby Rudge*, 1841, *Martin Chuzzlewit*, 1844, *Dombey and Son*, 1848, *David Copperfield*, 1850, *Little Dorrit*, 1857, *A Tale of Two Cities*, 1859, *Great Expectations*, 1861, *Our Mutual Friend*, 1865. When the author died in 1870, six monthly numbers of *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* (a mystery no critic has yet solved) had already appeared. Dickens was buried in Westminster Abbey in his fifty-ninth year; Thackeray, born a year before him, died seven years before him, and had to be content with Kensal Green.

Space would fail were I to attempt a catalogue of the great writers of English fiction who, with Charles Dickens, must be reckoned as 'runners-up' towards the First Class. Many people would admit to that class George Eliot (Mary Ann Evans), Charlotte Brontë, Thomas Hardy, and George Meredith;² and votes would also be given for Miss Edgeworth, Mrs. Gaskell, George Borrow, Thomas Love Peacock, John Galt, Frederick Marryat, Anthony Trollope, and Benjamin Disraeli. It is time to turn to the poets.

In 1815 Wordsworth's best was done, though the greatest of all his poems, *The Prelude*, was only given to the world in the year of his death (1850). He had just settled at

¹ It is wonderful to think that a man of twenty-five could write *Pickwick*.

² Mr. Hardy is still alive, and both he and Meredith are too near our own time to enable us to pass a fair judgement on their claims to immortality.

Rydal, and *The White Doe* appeared in 1815. *Yarrow Revisited and Other Poems* came out twenty years later. Additions were made to the *Sonnets* in 1838. In spite of much early disparagement, there were, even at the beginning of our period, good judges who were inclined to give the poet a very high place, although it was the *Biographia Literaria* of Coleridge (1817) that first lifted him on to his proper pinnacle. Wordsworth lived to be eighty and to be called Poet Laureate in his last seven years. It would be idle to deny that, in all his work except the *Sonnets*, there are vast tracts of arid desert to be crossed before we come out on the shining table-lands. But when we reach these we are in a light that never was anywhere else on sea or land. Wordsworth is as 'mere English' as Queen Elizabeth, and it is one of the great glories of England to have been the mother of such a poet. To anything like careful selection of beautiful words he was indifferent, yet when his spirit was rapt into ecstasy, in his long communions at the altar of Nature, his thoughts clothed themselves in language of a nobility which has never been surpassed.

The poetic temper of Keats, who died in 1821, in his twenty-sixth year, is a strong contrast to Wordsworth's. He is passion incarnate. He is steeped in Elizabethan and Carolian literature. He works everything up into the richest diction; he 'charges every rift with ore'. His first volume of verse was published in 1817 and was followed by *Endymion* in the next year. The volume of 1820 contained his greatest work, *Lamia, Isabella, St. Agnes' Eve*, and the fragment of *Hyperion*. All were ill-received or unnoticed, and Byron fixed the tradition that the *Quarterly Review* 'killed John Keats'. It was not until the publication of his *Life and Letters* by Lord Houghton that the victim came to his own as one of the greatest of the Romantics.

In poetry, at least (*pace* Sir Francis Galton), neither heredity nor environment seem to count for much. If Keats came from a livery-stable, and worked as a medical student, the other great 'poets' poet', Shelley, was the heir of a dull, rich, Whig squirc. *Queen Mab* alone had been written before

1815. *Alastor* first showed Shelley's true greatness (1816). *The Revolt of Islam*, 1818, *The Cenci*, 1819, *Prometheus Unbound*, 1820, *Epipsychidion* and *Adonais*, 1821, successively followed; and the whole of the last five years of Shelley's life, 1817-22, sparkled with glorious lyrics. Few, except savage reviewers, read any of these things in the poet's lifetime, and most people judged him (from *Queen Mab*) to be a rebel, an outlaw, an atheist, and a man of bad character. He was certainly the first, and, as certainly, not the last, of these things. When he was drowned at thirty he was rapidly sloughing off his youthful prejudices, and was reaching out towards heights seldom attained by man. His wildest attacks on conventions had sprung from his generous passion for righting all the wrongs of the world at once. To those who loved him truly, he was truly noble. But even of these no one quite understood him; for, in spirit, as well as in person, he seemed to be 'like some changeling from the land of Faëry'.

If no one in the days of the Regency read Keats or Shelley, every one read Byron, partly because he was a lord (and posed as the wicked lord), more because he was essentially representative of his age, and, in spite of many grave defects, a great poet. He poured out many long, dramatic, gloomy poems between 1812, when, with the first instalment of *Childe Harold*, he 'awoke one morning and found himself famous', and 1819, when *Don Juan* began to appear. If we do not now read these long poems, the loss is our own, for there is grand stuff in all of them. But we would give them all for the numerous short lyrics which constitute his best claim to immortality. His death in 1824 from fever at Missolonghi, whither he had gone to help to liberate the Greeks, only heightened his fame.

It was on Byron that the boy Tennyson fed his youthful fancy. He was fourteen when he carved on a rock in the Rectory garden at Somersby 'Byron is dead'; and 'the world seemed to be darkened for him by that death'. Alfred was only seventeen when he and his brother Charles published, in 1827, *Poems by Two Brothers*. Until the success

of *In Memoriam* in 1850 Alfred was always poor, and the slender stipend of the Laureateship, in which he succeeded Wordsworth in that year, was welcome. But from the appearance of the volume of 1833 (containing, with many other beauties, *Oenone*, *The Lotos-eaters*, *A Dream of Fair Women*), still more from the two volumes of 1842 (*Locksley Hall*, *Morte d'Arthur*, *Ulysses*, *Sir Galahad*, &c.), his fame was established. It has never waned since, and is not likely to wane. The lyrics in *The Princess* (the first edition appeared without them) in 1850, *The Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington*, 1852, *Maud* (said, rather strangely, to be his own favourite), 1855, *Enoch Arden*, 1864, *Ballads and Other Poems* (*The Revenge*, *The Defence of Lucknow*, among them), 1880, added more to his reputation than the *Idylls of the King*, which, begun in 1859, were only completed in 1872. Tennyson had still twelve years to live, and splendid work to do, when our period closed. That all is not equal to the best of it is true, yet few poets have composed so much without falling more frequently than he below their own best standard. Though he has yet to abide the test of time, it seems impossible to doubt that he will be found with Wordsworth, Shelley, Keats and Byron.

With these, however, closes the list of those of whom we can be sure. If Tennyson was a perfect master of word-music, as well as of beautiful poetic thoughts, his almost exact contemporary, Robert Browning, was master of neither. Browning was a metaphysical writer, a subtle analyst of human character and motive; and, in spite of his simple, honourable, and optimistic outlook, he seems to have taken pains to make his poetic analysis as obscure and involved in language, as difficult to 'read without the crib', as possible. Yet, by many persons of subtle intellect, he has been reckoned the greatest of all poets, and Tennyson a driveller compared to him. Unfortunately Browning has also been worshipped by some who have posed as beings of superior taste. People of both these classes became, at the end of our period (1881), members of a Society for the study and the exposition of Browning's works eight years before

his own death.¹ Browning had to live through long years of neglect; it was *The Ring and the Book*, in the late sixties, which first gave him a considerable public. His other most famous poems are *Pauline*, 1832, *Paracelsus*, 1835, *Strafford* (a play), 1837, *Sordello*, 1840, *Bells and Pomegranates*, 1841-6, *Fifine at the Fair*, 1872, *Red Cotton Nightcap Country*, 1873. There are numerous other short pieces which appeal to ordinary readers far more than his long metaphysical poems, of which however *Balaustion's Adventure* may be singled out as having beauty to touch every one. This robust and gallant Englishman had yet a fancy for choosing his subjects, as his residences, almost anywhere rather than in England, and preferably in Italy. It was principally in Italy that the happy years of his short married life, with his wife Elizabeth Barrett, herself a true poetess, were passed, 1845-61.

How numerous in our period have been the 'sweet singers of a day'; how numerous those who have to be judged by a slender output, even by a single lyric, or those again who, like Matthew Arnold, have achieved a celebrity partly in poetry, partly in prose. The world will not let die *Thyrsis*, *The Scholar Gipsy*, *The Forsaken Merman*, nor the magnificent close of *Sohrab and Rustum*, though Arnold's *Essays on Criticism and Literature and Dogma* have hardly outlived his own epoch. If Praed, Tom Moore, and Tom Hood may definitely be classed as 'minor poets' it would be cruel to apply that term to Tom Campbell, Walter Savage Landor, Arthur Clough, Dante Rossetti, Christina Rossetti, or William Morris. Scattered in Macaulay's *Life and Letters* are one or two lyrics of striking power; ² few things cut like

¹ 'The poet who has only profound meanings, and not the witchery which is to carry his expression of those meanings to our hearts, has failed. The primary requisite of poetry is that it shall move us; not that it shall instruct us.' (G. H. Lewes, *Life of Goethe*, 1855, vii. 7.) Was this snarl at *Faust, Part II* really directed at the snarler's friend Browning?

² Those of us whose insides still harbour a little of the 'auld leaven' can forgive him much Whiggery for his lovely lines called *A Jacobite's Epitaph*.

his *Epitaph on Voltaire*, little ballad-poetry since Scott's has such a clarion ring as his *Lays of Ancient Rome*. Fitzgerald's *Omar Khayyam* purports to be a translation; in reality it is an original poem, whose echoes will linger long. Some of Charles Kingsley's lyrics are almost perfect; almost perfect, too, is his prose-poem *The Water-Babies*. Where, indeed, is the critic to draw the line?

One to whom it is yet too early to assign a definite place, Algernon Swinburne, with his fiery mop of red hair, typical of his blasphemous spirit of revolt, must be mentioned apart. *Atalanta in Calydon* in 1865, *Poems and Ballads* in 1866, took considerable sections of the world by storm. There was scandal as well as storm, and some persons of good taste were shocked at many of the verses in the latter volume. *Songs before Sunrise* followed in 1871, *Bothwell* in 1874, *Poems and Ballads, Second Series*, in 1878. Other beautiful verse was to come after the close of our period, and the frail little poet, who was always 'overdoing himself' in more ways than one, lived to be nearly seventy-two, though his fountain of song was dry long before his death. If Swinburne is destined to be an immortal it will be due to the magic melody of his lines¹ rather than to the greatness of his thoughts.

Coleridge's poetical work had been done long before 1815, though *Christabel* and *Kubla Khan*, each breathing the Romantic spirit at its height, were only published about the same time as his *Biographia Literaria*, 1816-17. His *Table Talk*, his *Literary Remains*, and some of his *Lectures* were published after his death. He was great in many fields, and those who understand philosophy find him almost greatest there. Shelley's friend Peacock, who thought that all philosophers were 'absorbed in the contemplation of their own mismanaged sensibilities', took off Coleridge in *Nightmare Abbey* (1818) as 'Mr. Flosky'; 'I pity the man,' says Mr. Flosky, 'who can see the connexion of his own ideas; still more do I pity him, the connexion of whose ideas any

¹ 'The rise and rush and roar of the volleying anapaests.' (G. Saintsbury, *A Scrap Book*, 1922, 87.)

other person can see.' This may be true of the philosopher, but in literary criticism Coleridge was supreme, though less full of charming fancy than his old schoolfellow, Charles Lamb. Lamb was a faithful friend to the irresponsible dreamy Coleridge, until their deaths in the same year, 1834. He was the greatest of all Essayists, greater even than Addison; with affinities to the Romantics by the back-door of the Elizabethans, he has even more affinities to the Eighteenth Century, memories of which, so far as they could be followed in the London and the Hertfordshire of George IV, he embalmed for us in flawless prose in the *Essays of Elia*, 1823, and *Last Essays of Elia*, 1833.

Historians are less likely to survive than writers of avowed fiction or romance. It is possible that Macaulay, Kinglake, and Lecky for their brilliance and clarity, Carlyle for his rugged splendour, Stubbs and Gardiner for their patient weighing of evidence, are destined to long life, longer, in any case, than Hallam, Grote, Freeman, or Froude. Yet, of those mentioned, Macaulay alone, though not of the calibre of Gibbon or Lord Clarendon, who recall for us the weighty measured judgements of the Ancient World, is likely to become a classic. Prophets, other than the Hebrew, have their day and cease to be, and Carlyle, who, whether as historian or critic, had probably the most powerful intellect applied to literature in the Nineteenth Century, suffers more from having been athwart most current opinions than from his own style. His *Frederick the Great*, the least read of his books to-day, is yet one of the finest bits of historical work of the century; his flame-picture called *The French Revolution* is, considering the early date of its appearance (1837), far sounder in its judgements than is generally believed. His style alternately attracts and repels, although for the opposite reason to Macaulay's. The latter began his *History of England from the Accession of James II* in 1839, and published the fourth volume in 1855; the projection was so wide that at his death he had barely reached the end of William III. His bias in favour of the Whigs is almost as openly avowed as was Dr. Johnson's against them. No

historian, not even a Thucydides nor a Gibbon, can hope to maintain his judgements unaffected by later discoveries, and Bishop Stubbs's great *Constitutional History of England*, based upon the most laborious researches into the evidence available at the date of its publication (1873-8), has been a great sufferer.

A prophet akin in spirit to Carlyle, but of less intellectual power, was John Ruskin. Ruskin's early years were devoted to art and the criticism of art, but his whole life was one long struggle, now joyous, now sombre, against the 'Philistinism'¹ of ordinary Britons. *Modern Painters*, in which he revealed Turner to his countrymen, appeared slowly between 1843 and 1860: *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* heralded in 1849 our sad attempts at the revival of Gothic style; *The Stones of Venice*, perhaps the most beautiful of his three great works, was published between 1851 and 1853. Smaller, but hardly less enthusiastic, appeals for truth, beauty, and honesty, both in art and common life, accompanied and followed these. Ruskin's courage was splendid, his knowledge great, his judgement not always infallible. The prose of Carlyle may one day be studied with curiosity, as men now explore 'Middle-English'; the prose of Ruskin will be read for its richness of diction, its felicity of phrase.

As an art critic Ruskin was *felix opportunitate*. It was easy to smite the Architects and Royal Academicians of the forties and fifties. Concerning our architects, the policy of silence is best. Since the decline, and the final abandonment, of the simple, honest, and cold classicism of the eighteenth century, the history of British building (with the exception of some good imitations, towards the end of the period, of Wren's style) has been a record of horrors, from Wyatt, who died in 1813, through Pugin and Gilbert Scott, to Butterfield, the perpetrator of Keble College, who lived till 1900. Glorious seventeenth-century work, e.g. at Winchester and at Balliol College, was pulled down to make room for heavy tasteless 'Decorated' and for worse 'Early English'. Ornamentation, cheap paint and gilding, brass screens with

¹ The word comes to us from the Germany of Goethe.

red and blue knobs, frescoes in the mediaeval (or shall we say the modern Munich?) style, invaded our churches. It was well known that in the Middle Ages churches were painted from roof to floor: they should be painted again to 'revive the faith of the people'. Let us shiver and pass on; for these things are still being done to-day.¹ The wealth squandered on them since 1830 would have paid off the National Debt.

In Sculpture there is one great name at the beginning of the period, for Flaxman lived till 1826, but he belonged wholly to the previous generation. Sir Francis Chantrey (died 1841) is famous for the *Sleeping Children* in Lichfield Cathedral, a very beautiful piece of work. He had great success and made a great fortune, but he was barely worthy to hand Flaxman his chisel. The history of Painting in the Nineteenth Century is a more dangerous sea for an ignorant critic to embark upon. Sir Henry Raeburn was in 1815 the only survivor of the Great Age (with whose most illustrious persons he had, indeed, had little contact) and he lived till 1823. But he was *sui generis*, taught in no school, and leaving no school behind him. Of his immortality we can be sure, though we must travel to Edinburgh to get any conception of his power. Wilkie was right when, in the gallery of Madrid itself, he declared that, of all British artists, Raeburn most nearly approached Velasquez. Raeburn, moreover, was favoured with the most splendid subjects for his portraiture; the Scottish aristocracy of his day was the most virile and unspoiled in the world. Of two landscape painters also we can, in spite of Ruskin's depreciation of one of them, be sure. What Wordsworth was in poetry, John Constable was in painting, mere English, and deeply rooted in the soil of his native Suffolk. 'Within a few hundred yards of Flatford or Bergholt eight or ten of his greatest works may be seen in Nature to-day.' Constable took counsel of no one but Nature, and he freed English landscape from the Dutch tradition, which had affected even

¹ Let any one who remembers Salisbury Cathedral fifty years ago go and look at it now—and weep!

Gainsborough. 'When I look at a mill painted by John,' said John's brother Abraham, 'I see that it will go round.' It is not to the credit of English taste that Constable was appreciated in France earlier than in England. He died in 1837, and was fortunate in having his best friend Leslie to write for him one of the most charming of biographies.

In striking contrast to this great realist was the great idealist, J. M. W. Turner, who said of himself in his later life that 'indistinctness was his *forte*'. Ruskin, who first met him in 1840, classified his work into periods, ending successively at 1820, 1835, and, at his death, in 1851. Turner had a fancy for introducing, into his gorgeous land- and sea-scapes, classical or mythological persons like Ulysses, Dido, Hannibal. Once he called something 'Moses writing the Book of Genesis'. This did not matter at all; what he gave to the world, both in his oil-paintings, many of which have suffered from the ravages of time, and his almost more perfect water-colours, was a series of magnificent effects of sea, sky, sunshine, and storm. Venice, though he first saw it in 1832, afforded subjects for some of his finest colouring. Alpine effects he painted as no one else ever painted them. He made no pretence of accuracy, and could work up a 'Sun rising over Glaciers' in the back parlour of a public-house in Yorkshire. Perhaps the finest of all his pictures is *The Fighting Temeraire tugged to her last berth* (1839).

Turner must often have seen at the Academy a boy-student called John Everett Millais, who entered the School in his twelfth year, 1840. This boy and Holman Hunt, soon to be joined by Rossetti, originated in 1848 the 'Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood', which was to herald a return to absolute fidelity of detail and to naturalism. Ruskin welcomed the Brotherhood with unstinted praise, the Philistine critics fell upon it savagely. It rescued British painting from the sentimental prettiness and vulgarity into which it had fallen in the days of Lawrence and his successors, but, as in all new movements, its disciples exaggerated its virtues, and, after a while, it merged into the 'aestheticism' which despised Sir Joshua and Gainsborough, and set Botticelli above Raphael

and the great Venetians. The P.R.B.' included some rich colourists and produced some 'pure sunshine on a green bank',¹ but the best-known exponent of its later style, Sir Edward Burne-Jones, bade defiance to the common posture of the human body, and therefore to Nature herself. William Morris, a true poet, endowed with a glorious sense of colour, was the hierophant of the school in literature, as in decorative art. From the exaggerations of this school Millais, after a time, turned away, though not before he had produced some of his finest pictures, e. g. *The Carpenter's Shop*, *Lorenzo and Isabella*, in the Pre-Raphaelite style. *Sir Isumbras at the Ford* (1857) marks his turning-point. None of his contemporaries in that school could touch him, as no one could touch him in his later and simpler manner. His finest landscape, *Chill October*, is of 1871, his greatest picture of natural sentiment, *The Northwest Passage*, is of 1874. He was as secure in portraiture as in landscape or in *genre*. He was as much scolded by the Ruskinians for deserting Pre-Raphaelitism as he had been by the Philistines for inaugurating it.

No such scolding was earned by the other great Victorian painter (who was also a sculptor), George Frederic Watts. Watts was born twelve years before Millais and lived eight years after him. Though the best of the Pre-Raphaelites did full homage to his genius he was never of their school, nor of any school except that of the Italian Renaissance—which is a vague term. Though a worshipper of the Venetians, he never learned, perhaps did not desire to learn, their colour-secret. Michael Angelo was his ideal, and perhaps, of all moderns in any country, he comes nearest to his master. Like that master he had the firmest belief in the lofty mission of art, and of the duty laid upon its exponents. His portraits—and he painted nearly all the distinguished men and women of his time—are as noble as his classical and symbolic conceptions, *Love and Death*, *Sir Galahad*, *Paolo and Francesca*, to name only three out of his (literally) hundreds of fine pictures. Watts's industry was as marvellous as his

¹ This, as Ruskin rightly said, is the most difficult thing for an artist to paint.

power; he was at work till the end of his life, and was nearly eighty-eight when he died. Together with Raeburn, Constable, Turner, and Millais his name will go down to posterity among those of the most illustrious British painters.

If the Age that we have been considering produced much literature, and some art, of the very highest quality, we shall find even greater reasons for pride when we turn to its achievements in the kindred realm of Science.¹

When the period opens Faraday was a laboratory attendant to Sir Humphry Davy, and Sir Joseph Banks was President (and autocrat) of the Royal Society; when it closes, Darwin was just going to learn the great secret, William Thomson (Lord Kelvin) and Huxley were at the height, Joseph Lister (Lord Lister) at the ascent, of fame. An entire devotion to any branch of Natural Science probably leads to the happiest life of which man is capable. And, since it has ceased to be in the power of churchmen to stifle thought in material fire, the history of the devotees of Nature, from Newton to Darwin, bears out this dictum. In the pure and rarefied atmosphere which they breathe the horrors of politics pass unheeded, the zeal for discovery swallows up the lust for money or fame, and little room is left for personal, none for international, jealousy.

There was considerable difference between the outlook of men of science at the beginning and the end of the period. From the date (1788) of the foundation of the Linnean Society, a whole brood of learned associations, each concerned with some particular branch of natural knowledge, had been inaugurated, many of them within the first twenty-five years of our period. Each may also be called a daughter of the

¹ An author is equally responsible for all sections of his book, but I hope my readers will guess that, in parts of this section, I have been obliged to seek expert advice (especially when treating of chemistry, physics, astronomy, and the art of healing) on a very large scale; indeed, in accepting this advice, I have frequently been obliged to use words and phrases which convey little meaning to myself. For the whole of the section I am under much obligation to my friend Mr. R. T. Gunther of Magdalen College, and for much of it to Mr. G. H. J. Adlam.

great Royal Society whose charter dates from Charles II. We have now a Geographical, a Botanical, an Astronomical, a Zoological, a Geological, a Chemical, and a Physical, Society. We have the Royal Institution and the British Association for the Advancement of Science. Each of such bodies has printed, at stated periods, volumes of its 'Proceedings and Transactions', in which the youngest and least-known student may hope to publish an account of his researches. Moreover, the British Museum and the South Kensington Museum (now, 1880, united) have encouraged collectors by paying for valuable specimens of known species, or for any new species, from any quarter of the globe. Explorers and sportsmen have thus been stimulated to study Nature, and our national collections have been enriched by the contributions of such men as Bates, Belt, Swinhoe, Wallace, Speke, and Baker, not to mention Darwin and Huxley themselves.

In 1815, however, specialism was in its infancy. The term 'natural philosophy' still covered everything scientific. Science was already the mother of many daughters, but a lover might woo several of them at once without injury to his, or their, characters or prospects. In 1880 a chemist or an astronomer, who should also pursue botany or geology, would be something of a bigamist. The world has perhaps been the gainer by specialization; the specialists themselves have lost a good deal.

Sir Humphry Davy was a great chemist and electrician;¹ he made many discoveries about gases and metals, was a charming teacher and a brave experimentalist, but it has often been said that his greatest discovery was Michael Faraday, who became his assistant at the Royal Institution in 1813. Faraday was equally great in chemistry and in physics, and was greatly able to impart instruction in both. He liquefied many gases, but his most brilliant work was in the relation between electric currents and magnetic fields. We may say that he was the first practical exponent in Britain

¹ Davy constructed a giant battery, which produced a current strong enough to foreshadow the electric light. His researches into flame led him to the invention of the miner's 'safety-lamp'.

of the powers of electricity. It was owing to his work that (Sir) Charles Wheatstone could set up his electric telegraph in Euston Square in 1837, and that the Italians, forty years later, could harness the new fairy to produce light and heat.¹ While neither able nor willing to assign any limits to the new force, Faraday gave it its terminology and fixed its units. He used to say that he could have produced a first-class thunderstorm with an electric coil and a drop of water. He also studied the magnetism of the atmosphere, and so was the herald of the science of meteorology. He wrestled with the theory of atoms and with the action of light. His health broke in 1841, and, though he lived till 1867, his best work had been done long before that date. After 1840, he was often reaching out into speculations wherein no one could follow him.² Faraday's character was most beautiful and lovable, and he found an especial pleasure in explaining the miracles of nature to large audiences of children.

Working independently of Faraday, but on similar lines, and also on the lines of Benjamin Thompson (Count Rumford), James Joule of Manchester discovered in 1843 the quantitative relation between heat and work, an example of the law called the 'Conservation of Energy'. He proved that 'energy' is infinitely transformable, yet as indestructible, by any known agency, as matter. If a layman is apt to ask 'what is energy?' the answer must be 'the product of some mechanical or natural force'; the twirled stick of the savage, producing fire, is one illustration of it, sun-heat is another; it is the 'energy' stored up in coal that we convert into steam. Joule begat William Thomson, a greater man than himself, but all three, Faraday, Joule, Thomson, were breathing the air that Newton, in his most rapt moments, had breathed.

The forties were the age of the German Baron Liebig, whose researches into the application of chemistry to agriculture led to a scientific treatment of our soil and our crops

¹ Waterloo Bridge was lit with electric light in 1879.

² He had the courage to publish, in June 1861, a denunciation of the imposture of Spiritualism, the professors of which, then as always, refused to submit their 'discoveries' to open tests.

by Lawes at Rothamsted and by others. Daubeny in 1835 had traced the action of variegated rays of light, on the growth of plants. (Sir) William Frankland, in the next period, investigated the grouping of atoms in chemical compounds, began also to deodorize the Thames (1859), and to give our cities pure water to drink. (Sir) William Crookes¹ was the pioneer of incandescent light, and invented the radiometer; he studied the phenomena which accompany the passage of electric discharges through *vacua*, and his work led directly to modern theories of the constitution of atoms. (Lord) Playfair, who afterwards 'to party gave up what was meant for mankind', applied chemical science to the iron and steel manufactures, and taught how to use the by-products of these industries. The elemental idea of photography had been known as early as 1802,² when Thomas Wedgwood obtained prints from the agency of light; in 1839 Faraday exhibited prints made by Fox Talbot, in 1840 Sir John Herschel discovered a chemical which would fix such prints. Improvements on these processes, and on those of the Frenchman, Daguerre, were made by Talbot.³

Among later physicists, John Tyndall followed up Faraday's experiments in magnetism, and, as a pioneer on the radiation of heat, published his *Heat as a mode of Motion* in 1863. In 1870 he contributed to the future science of bacteriology the theory that the air is full of organic (and generally deleterious) matter. A Cambridge scholar, James Clerk Maxwell, between 1855 and his death in 1879, gave to much of Faraday's work, on the theory of heat, on electro-magnetism, and on the waves of light, the mathematical confirmation which had

¹ He was one of the few scientific men who had a leaning towards spiritualism.

² If not far earlier. Roger Bacon, Leonardo da Vinci, both have claims as pioneers. The darkening of silver salts by the action of light was known to Boyle in the seventeenth century.

³ Instantaneous photography came only at the end of our period, 1878; it was the marriage of this principle to the swiftly whirling 'zoetrope' that eventually led to the kinematograph, which can, indeed, be used for valuable instruction, but is too often degraded to meet the vulgar taste of to-day.

hitherto been lacking. But the greatest of all who had spiritually sat at Faraday's feet was William Thomson, of Belfast and Glasgow, afterwards Lord Kelvin. Beginning as a pure mathematician (and like so many great men of his trade, second, not senior, wrangler; also, like very few wranglers, a famous sculler), Thomson became a professor at Glasgow at twenty-two. He met Joule in the next year and embarked on his physical studies on lines similar to Joule's. By 1862 he had fixed the science of thermodynamics, hydrodynamics, and electrodynamics: what, he asked, is the source of the sun's heat? is heat the beginning of life? where may we look for the origin of cosmic energy? Always eager for practical results Thomson applied science to the problem of the Atlantic cable which, after several failures, was successfully laid in 1866. A famous amateur sailor, he contributed valuable improvements to the art of navigation, especially to the mariner's compass, to methods of deep-sea sounding,¹ to our knowledge of the tides and of wave-motion. He even took naval construction under his wing.² He had a long controversy with Huxley on the age of our planet, being himself in favour of a trifling hundred million years. He invented many instruments for harnessing electricity for the service of men, and he made his own models of all his inventions. And, all the time, he, like Faraday, was reaching out towards untravelled heights. Nothing, he believed, was unknowable; yet at the end of his life he, like Newton, avowed that he knew almost nothing. He died at the age of 83 in 1907.³

¹ The expedition of H.M.S. *Challenger*, 1872-6, led the way in deep-sea dredging, revealing the constituents of the ocean floor, and so contributing to our ability to read 'the ghostly language of the ancient earth'. The chief naturalist on board was (Sir) C. Wyville Thomson.

² Lord Kelvin in his old age was one of the designers of H.M.S. *Dreadnought*.

³ When the celebrated 'Greek Question' was under discussion at Oxford in 1904, the President, and three ex-Presidents, of the Royal Society wrote letters deprecating the abolition of compulsory Greek. Lord Kelvin's note lies before me: 'I believe the knowledge of

In Astronomy the period is famous for the careers of the younger (Sir J. F.) Herschel (died 1871), and Sir George Airy (died 1892); for the 'capture' of endless stars and nebulae¹ in both hemispheres, leading to new celestial maps; for Lord Rosse's giant telescope at Parsonstown, built in 1845; for the location of the new planet Neptune by Adams in 1845;² for more than one theory of sun-spots. Photography came, in the latter half of the period, to the assistance of the telescope, and proved its value at Solar Eclipses. The Spectroscope, a chosen weapon of chemists in the forties, was first applied to astronomy by Sir W. Huggins in the sixties. It has enabled us to analyse prismatic light, and so to determine the composition of the heavenly bodies, even if we cannot yet discern

l'amor che move il sole e l'altre stelle.

Even greater interest attaches itself, if we shift our gaze from above to below, to the development of the kindred sciences of Geology and Biology. The influence of the latter upon Medicine and Surgery, and so upon the alleviation of human suffering, has been immense, while both have united to effect a revolution in opinion, and so have worked for the liberation of the human mind. Both sciences, and especially biology, are making such progress under our very eyes that it is as difficult to close a summary review of them at 1880 as it is to begin one at 1815.

For some time before the appearance, in 1830-3, of Charles Lyell's *Principles of Geology*, intelligent persons had begun to guess that the earth must be somewhat older than the six thousand years allowed by Archbishop Ussher's *Chronologia*, and that something beyond six days had been

Greek required for the "Little-go" at Cambridge, though small, is exceedingly useful to Science students in after life. I think the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge should continue to require a moderate knowledge of Greek of all their graduates, while arranging that for Science students it should not damagingly interfere with their other studies.'

¹ Astronomers 'capture' stars, as entomologists capture butterflies.

² The first vision of this was also claimed both in Paris and Berlin.

expended in its creation; that the petrified animals and plants (far other in form than those existing) found in its rocks pointed, perhaps, to age-long movements. In the long list of the 'Nation's Wealth of Smiths' there have been many Williams, but few William Smiths have done greater service to knowledge than the self-taught canal-engineer, who first grasped the connexion between the date of the fossil remains, then being constantly discovered, and the ages of the several strata of rock in which they were found. Smith, after long labour, published in 1815 a map of underground England and Wales down to, and including, the coal-bearing strata. Henceforth palaeontology became the handmaiden not only of geology, but of biology as well.

When Lyell was meditating over his *Principles*, most geologists were accounting for the successive strata, and their mysterious contents, by the guess that a series of catastrophes had in bygone ages successively destroyed all animal and vegetable life, and that new types had, after each catastrophe, been created to fit the new conditions. Lyell, working upon Smith's principles, and not himself diving much below the upper 'Tertiary' strata, propounded the notion of a gradual, not a catastrophic, process of change. Adam Sedgwick and Roderick Murchison slowly accepted this view and dug downwards into the still older rocks of Scotland and Wales.¹ They were a prickly pair, and, as men of science seldom do, they quarrelled over the nomenclature of strata. By the middle of the century, in spite of some brave champions of *Genesis*, the slow upheaval of mountains, the erosion of valleys by rivers, the wearing away of rocks by frost and wind and storm, were generally accepted as earth-history; and the notion of moving ice-sheets and glaciers, as probable agents in surface-making, was also winning its way. To-day we reckon more than one 'glacial epoch' in geological time and in the history of life on earth. The 'record of the rocks' is still very fragmentary, but every discovery of recent years has only confirmed Lyell's view. Lyell gave his science its nomenclature, and divided the series of rocks into groups

¹ Murchison's *Silurian System* appeared in 1838.

according to their (guessed) relative ages. That changes in the past probably took place on the same lines as those of historical time was the ground of all his teaching, and it was to be the text of the young biologists who owed everything to that teaching. On the origin of the *Cosmos* Lyell could say, and he attempted to say, nothing; he merely stood for its uniform progress. He became the intimate friend of Darwin in the late thirties, and, though long holding out against the transmutation of species, ended by capitulating even before Darwin's book appeared. In 1863, twelve years before his own death, he published one of the most fascinating books of science ever written, *The Antiquity of Man*.

The antiquity of man, and his life alongside of many species of animals either extinct, or found alive only in far-distant countries, had with great reservation been accepted in the early twenties by William Buckland, afterwards Dean of Westminster, father of the genial Frank. The Dean accounted for his 'finds' of strange bones on the supposition that they were relics of Noah's flood which had got washed into Yorkshire caves.¹ Twenty years later M. Boucher de Perthes, poking about into the 'river-gravels' of Picardy (through which early railway-cuttings were being made), discovered, together with human bones and bones of tropical animals, strange implements and weapons of flint. For a long time sceptics denied that these weapons had been shaped by human hands.² By 1860 they were being freely unearthed in Britain also, and have since been generally accepted as evidences of a 'Stone Age'. This is now divided into an Old-Stone Age, dated before the last glaciation of Europe, and a New-Stone Age, post-glacial, according to the respective 'finish' of the weapons.³

All such indications of an earlier world came as swelling tributaries into the great sea of thought on which Darwin put out to voyage alone—at first in a frail cockleshell—during his

¹ *Reliquiae Diluvianae*, 1823.

² Such people were, of course, absolutely right to suspend judgement.

³ See vol. i, Chapter I.

five years of absence from Europe as 'naturalist' in H.M.S. *Beagle*, 1831-6. Meanwhile the geographical distribution of plants was being studied by Sir William Hooker and his son (Sir) Joseph, successively Directors of Kew Gardens. To both Darwin owed much, and Joseph Hooker was a friend scarcely less loved than Lyell. To (Sir) Richard Owen's classification of extinct *mammalia* Darwin also owed much knowledge, together with a lifelong opposition of that bitter controversialist against his inductions.¹ To Thomas Huxley, a young worker in Owen's field, he owed, in some ways, more than to any one else. For Huxley early became his unflinching champion against all comers.

The conception of an 'evolution' of the world, and of the life upon it, is far older than the conjectures of Charles Darwin. There are indications of it among such fragments as remain of Ionian-Greek thought. Against it could be pleaded the authority of the Old Testament in favour of a separate creation of every species, each being presumed to be immutable until it should die out. In 1859 we knew, from their fossil remains, that there had once been flying dragons (called, more learnedly, pterodactyls) and that these, happily, were now extinct. But that these could be near relatives of reptiles, terrestrial and aquatic, or of birds—in short, that a species could ever change, or another be 'evolved' from it—the idea was manifestly impossible. And no more could be said until some one could make a reasonable conjecture of the causes and processes of such evolution,² which is a very different thing from the vague acceptance of evolution as a principle. The hour, however, was now come, and the man.

Darwin, to whose catholic mind nothing, except wilful ignorance, was common or unclean, was deeply interested

¹ Owen was the designer of those 'antediluvian animals' in the Crystal Palace gardens which were the delight (and the terror) of children in the sixties.

² Lamarck had put forward in 1809 the theory that an animal could, in response to desire, produce on itself a new organ, and thus bring about a morphological change, which it could transmit to its descendants.

in, though he felt himself obliged to reject, Lamarck's interpretation of the palimpsest of Nature. He united, however, in his own person two factors which qualified him to hit upon a true reading of that palimpsest. These factors were long and patient observation of the phenomena of species (observation beginning in the favourable locality of some Pacific islands, long, but, in geological time, not too long, separated from the South American continent), and a brain daring enough to soar into the highest regions of speculation. For twenty-two years Darwin brooded over, and experimented on, the question 'What is a species?' and, by an amazing piece of good fortune,¹ on the eve of giving his own explanation to the world, he received from Alfred Russel Wallace, then in the Malay Archipelago, a complete confirmation of the conclusions at which he had himself arrived. *The Origin of Species*, published in 1859, has made steady headway since that year, as the most probable and most comprehensive explanation of the growth of life upon the earth. From its author, as from every one else, the beginning of life still remained hidden. *The Origin* was followed in 1868 by *The Variation of Animals and Plants under Domestication*, and in 1871 by *The Descent of Man*. Other books, pamphlets, and Transactions of learned Societies, contain the author's views on the expression of the emotions, the growth of coral-reefs, the fertilization of plants, the action of earthworms. Of pure 'observers' Darwin was perhaps the greatest that ever lived; nothing was so insignificant as to escape his notice, no test was too laborious for his patience. When we reflect that in his last forty years his health was very frail, that his daily hours of work never approached those of a robust man, and that he had to take long periods of complete rest, the marvel of his labours is heightened. Though no great 'scholar' (he had been bored with Latin and Greek at Shrewsbury, and had been mainly a sportsman at Cambridge), nor widely read outside the realms of science, and though never a conscious stylist, there is a charm about everything which this great thinker wrote, and it has been

¹ A lesser soul than Darwin's would have called it cruel ill fortune.

felt by thousands of readers who hardly know an earwig from a caterpillar. Darwin died, patient and faithful to the end, in 1882.

That many of his views have been modified by those who climbed upon his shoulders is natural, and he, the most generous of mankind, would have been the first to acclaim his correctors.¹ His main principle stands out unshaken; species have been, from age to age, modified by 'natural selection' and by sexual selection. As they have adapted themselves, or have not adapted themselves, to their environment, so they have persisted or they have become extinct. Herbert Spencer in his *Principles of Psychology* had accepted evolution as a principle some few years before *The Origin of Species* traced its probable causes and processes. In the sixties, fortified by Darwin's arguments, he tried to extend the principle to the phenomena of human thought. In the seventies a young Cambridge scholar and mathematician, William Kingdon Clifford, cut off in 1879 at thirty-three,² followed up this idea and analysed, as it were, the 'stuff' of the mind from the evolutionary standpoint. Spencer pressed into his service another new science, Anthropology, which is based on investigation of the rituals of savage tribes, and also on the earliest traceable records of ancient custom.³ Spencer, however, was mainly a 'philosopher', and neither an observer nor a naturalist. He took, indeed, like Bacon, all knowledge to be his province (and was careful to state the fact), but he had few roots in the real world, and his arrogant temper and extravagant claims were in striking contrast to the modesty of Darwin. Another

¹ In common with every one else Darwin remained in ignorance of the theory of hybridization, and of 'breeding pure' in the second generation, which was discovered and published in 1866 by Gregor Mendel, Abbot of Brunn. This fell stillborn until it was taken up by Darwin's critics long after his death. Darwin would have welcomed Mendel's discoveries eagerly had they ever come within his view.

² In the opinion of all Clifford's contemporaries there were few heights to which he might not have risen.

³ Of this science Edward Tylor on the one side, and Sir Henry Maine on the other, were the founders.

worker in a parallel field was Darwin's cousin, (Sir) Francis Galton, who from African exploration passed on to Anthropometry, i. e. the measurement of different parts of the human body, and thence to the phenomena of heredity. His *Hereditary Genius* was published in 1869; his *Enquiry into Human Faculty* in 1883. Galton founded the 'Eugenic' school, which holds that the human race could be vastly improved by careful breeding.

For Darwin's own phrase, 'Natural Selection', Spencer substituted the more expressive 'Survival of the Fittest' (i. e. in the struggle for life between species as well as between individuals). The 'fittest' are not necessarily the most useful, or the highest, in the economy of Nature, but often those least exposed to attacks, or most capable of reproduction under all circumstances. Two disquieting reflections occur to those who feel bound to accept this principle: first that, under modern conditions, it seems to point to a probable survival of human races intellectually poorer, if physically more fertile, than the best; secondly that, while not in the least excluding, it does not depend upon, any guidance of the world from on high,¹ and it does show us a 'nature red in tooth and claw', in which Frank Buckland's 'eat or be eaten' seems to be a fixed law. This passing over (never in the least a denial) of a divine guidance led to a very intelligible outburst of theological intolerance against the new doctrine; and this outburst, first in 1860, called Huxley to Darwin's side as champion. It was the old story, said Darwin, of Galileo against the Catholic Church, of the age-long struggle of tradition against proof.

Huxley, like Spencer, was the son of a schoolmaster. As a young doctor and student of zoology, he had an experience similar to Darwin's, sailing the Southern Ocean for four years, 1846-50, in H.M.S. *Rattlesnake*. Here he studied

¹ There are many weighty passages on this subject in the late G. J. Romanes's *Darwin and after Darwin*; see especially i. 247. In striking contrast are the whole writings of Alfred Russel Wallace, who yet was as good a Darwinian as Darwin himself.

minute marine organisms, and sent home such learned papers that, on his return, he found himself famous. He rapidly grew into a great exponent of anatomy; as lecturer at the School of Mines, at the Royal Institution, at the College of Surgeons, and at South Kensington, he became a first-class teacher, and he delighted to instruct all classes of the community, not only in the phenomena of existing life, but also on the history of the fossil world. If he had one 'special subject', it was the skull and the brain within it. Descartes was his avowed master, and, as an ardent Cartesian, he laid down the necessity, nay the duty, of doubt. He coined the word 'Agnostic' (perhaps from the altar that Paul saw at Athens) to connote those who, like himself, suspended judgement on all traditions incapable of proof. Huxley had a matchless style, vast reading beyond the boundaries of Science, and perfect clearness of exposition. These gifts made him a terrible antagonist. He could, and did, tempt such clerical opponents as Gladstone, Wilberforce, and Pusey, out into the open, and then puffed away their Mosaic card-houses. But too often he dressed up his victims, as if in rude mockery, for the sacrifice, and so he hurt the feelings of many good and wise people. He was *saevo laetus negotio*.

All discoveries, of Scholarship as well as of Science, played into his hands. For, from 1860 at least, scientific study of the oldest Oriental texts, and of the history of the compilation of the Bible, was making it difficult, even for a bishop, to maintain that the Pentateuch was dictated to Moses, or that the whole of the New Testament was verbally inspired into the apostolic writers. Miraculous stories, such as the Deluge,¹ fared badly at Huxley's hands. He never denied the possibility of miracles (and Nature was to him, as to Darwin, an everlasting miracle), but he said that they demand stronger proof than other historical statements, and that the biblical miracles rest upon tradition alone. He was, much to his credit, one of the first to point

¹ The excavation of the ruined cities of Mesopotamia, especially of Nineveh in 1873, threw much doubt on the story of the Deluge.

out the real glory of the Jewish race, the exposition (in the Psalms and the Prophetic Books) of a system of ethics far higher than anything the world had known before Christ's teaching.

Controversy is perennial, and a world from which it should be excluded would be deaf and blind. Even to-day it is out of controversy that we are reaching out towards a view of religion higher and nobler than the dogmatic, liberating morality from its thralldom to dogma, elevating Christianity into the loftiest rule of life, and sweeping away the materialism which has so long clung to all our conceptions of life beyond the grave. We still see through a glass darkly, and the beatific vision is still far away, but surely we are less and less under the dominion of the theology or the cosmogony of *Paradise Lost*, and are perhaps on the eve of realizing that God is a Spirit and should be worshipped spiritually.

In Medicine and Surgery the progress of the nation during our period has been threefold: first, towards professional education of a higher kind than that known to Mr. Sawyer and Mr. Allen; secondly, in the region of pure discovery; and thirdly, in the improvement of clinical methods. Acts of Parliament—the first in 1815—have compelled practitioners to serve an apprenticeship to their craft. An Act of 1832 regulated the schools of anatomy, and checkmated the 'body-snatchers', who rifled graves in order to sell their contents for dissection.¹ There were already surgical and medical schools at the chief London hospitals, but the establishment of the University of London, with the hospital in Gower Street attached to it, was a great boon to the profession. The registration of births and deaths, with the cause of death certified by a qualified practitioner, became compulsory in 1837. Vaccination became free in 1840,

¹ In the late twenties a series of murders was committed in Edinburgh and some of the victims were sold for anatomical purposes. The 'garroters', who strangled men from behind in London in 1862, were believed to have a similar object.

compulsory in 1853.¹ Since 1872 there has been a 'Medical Officer of Health' in every district, and, though he has no power to put in force the numerous Sanitary Acts which have been passed for improving the health of the people, he is bound to notify cases of sickness resulting from neglect of such Acts. The Medical Act of 1858 defined a 'qualified practitioner', and created a Council with power to strike off the roll all persons practising without such a qualification. In 1876 women, if properly qualified, were admitted to practice. But only after our period ends was each student compulsorily examined in all branches of his profession before admission to practice (1886).

Jenner's discovery of vaccination, as a prophylactic against small-pox, came at the very end of the Eighteenth Century, and the great physician lived till 1823, busily spreading knowledge of the boon he had given to mankind. Medical diagnosis was improved when the stethoscope (a French invention already some years old) slowly came into use in the twenties; and there was much need for improvement, for the period 1830-41 was marked by a series of epidemics, beginning with the visitation of cholera in 1831. Bleeding was still the great remedy until about 1840, and few doctors thought of testing fever with the clinical thermometer before 1860. Drugs were still administered in very large doses, and their efficacy was too often held to depend upon their nastiness. Anything like scientific prophylaxis was, with the exception of vaccination, unknown, or at least unused; but the microscope, the most valuable of all weapons in pathology, began to be used in the second half of our period, and the discovery that cells in the human blood, invisible because colourless, could be rendered visible by aniline dyes, led to a true analysis of the chemical composition of the blood. The names of the chief Englishmen who laboured in these fields are Richard Bright (d. 1858),

¹ Early in the Twentieth Century some wretched politician, in order to win votes at an election, took off the compulsion, if the parent had a 'conscientious objection' to guarding his child against small-pox.

Thomas Addison (d. 1860), (Sir) Charles Bell (d. 1842), William Stokes of Dublin (d. 1878). Their labours have led to the discovery of drugs which will act powerfully upon the organs of our bodies. (Sir) Lauder Brunton, working in the same field, became in 1873 the pioneer of what is now called 'Organo-therapy'.

Surgery was better understood, and there are greater names in it in the first half of the century: (Sir) Astley Paston Cooper (d. 1841), John Abernethy, the most famous teacher of anatomy of his time (d. 1831), (Sir) Benjamin Brodie (d. 1862), James Syme (Lister's father-in-law, d. 1870), (Sir) James Paget, who lived to be 85, and died in 1899. One of the most brilliant operators of his day, a day in which as much depended on swiftness as on neatness, was Robert Liston of Edinburgh, who died young in the year in which was made the greatest discovery since the time of Hippocrates.

This was the use of chloroform as an anaesthetic, and the discoverer was (Sir) James Young Simpson, also from the great Edinburgh School. Liquid chloroform was known as a drug, and ether, of more than one kind, had already been used by dentists.¹ Simpson tried the vapour of chloroform first on himself and then on two assistants with perfect success (1847), and the news sped over the land. The churchmen, viewing pain as a 'dispensation', approved of it no more than they had approved of fossils in rocks, or than they were to approve of our arboreal ancestors. Simpson was much abused on both sides of the Tweed, but within ten years anaesthesia was universally accepted. Swiftness in operation now ceased to be all-important, and many operations could be performed which no conscious patient could have borne. Simpson was also the first specialist to afford relief to women suffering from diseases of the womb; and he was the prophet, long before their actual discovery, of the 'Röntgen Rays'.

¹ Davy himself had discovered the effect of nitrous oxide, commonly called 'laughing gas'.

France,¹ Prussia, and Britain all have claims to the next great discovery, which preceded in time Tyndall's theory of 1870, that the air is full of germs, 'bacteria' or 'microbes', as we now call them. It was Joseph (afterwards Lord) Lister who first utilized the new knowledge in the hospital-theatre. He found that wounds themselves, as well as the lesions of the operating knife, could be kept clean by the exclusion of germ-bearing air. The whole magnificent scheme of antiseptic surgery came into being just at the close of our period. Henceforward, a soldier would seldom see half a pint of maggots taken out of his wound every time it was dressed.² Medicine is almost as much indebted as surgery to the discovery of microbes, for the doctors can capture and inject into their patients benevolent species of these, which will prey upon their malevolent brethren. For diphtheria, typhoid fever, tuberculosis, cholera, lockjaw, bubonic plague, and many other fell diseases, the friendly germ, which is to destroy the hostile, has been discovered; for the fellest of all, cancer, he is being hunted, in half the laboratories of the world, every day. Germs become fewer as we get into purer air: high up in the Alps they are so comparatively few that consumptive patients are now sent thither instead of being stifled at Brompton. Could a man live perennially on the top of Mount Everest, his life, so far as disease-germs are concerned, might be indefinitely prolonged. Even the humble nose-cold is now known to be inflicted by a germ. Most, however, of the science of bacteriology dates from after our period.

Of all clinical aids to medical and surgical science, the best is the provision of scientifically trained nurses, not only in all hospitals, but available for service in the homes of the humblest patients. Florence Nightingale, who ended by driving Mrs. Gamp and Mrs. Prig to seek other means of livelihood, was born in 1820, and had made a study of

¹ Pasteur began his researches into the life-history of the yeast-plant in 1859.

² This horror was told to the writer in 1882 by a Crimean officer, concerning his experiences at Scutari.

the methods of Sisterhoods in France and Germany. Mrs. Fry and Mrs. Gurney, two great Quaker ladies, had been working on similar lines in England; all such institutions had at first a religious basis. The real birthday of British nursing, as a profession, was the foundation, in 1848, of St. John's House in St. Pancras, by Robert Bentley Todd (1809-60), Professor of Anatomy and Physiology at King's College; he was much assisted by Bishops Blomfield, Lonsdale, and Wordsworth, and by many other distinguished clergy and laity. The House undertook not only the training, but also the supply of nurses. It was from this institution that Miss Nightingale recruited her gallant band for service in the Crimean War. She herself lived to be ninety, dying only four years before our own Great War.

Not only in the spheres of thought, art, and research did our period mark an epoch in the history of Britain and of the world. It was fertile also in men of action, who would face every sort of peril and hardship in order to increase knowledge.

The impetus given to exploration by the Eighteenth-Century navigators¹ was wholly arrested by the War of 1793-1815. The Sixteenth-Century search for the White Gate to the Pacific Ocean had been revived in Cook's day. Cook himself had attempted it from the Pacific side; on his last voyage he had passed Bering Strait, and reached lat. 70° 20'. Three years before, Phipps² and Lutwidge had reached 80° 36' via Spitzbergen. After the War there were still unknown seas to be sailed, islands to be discovered, continents to be mapped. Few such things are left to-day. The Nineteenth-Century sailors turned their chief attention to the Polar regions, the land-travellers to continental Africa and Australia and to peninsular Arabia.

The Arctic maps of 1818 (there are two of that year in the Library of the Admiralty) show actual retrogression in

¹ See vol. iv, p. 214 sqq.

² Nelson, as a midshipman in Phipps's *Racehorse*, had there his famous encounter with a bear.

knowledge since the Seventeenth Century, for Baffin's Bay is omitted from both.¹ The whale-fishers, sailing principally from our east coast ports, contented themselves with the produce of Davis Strait, and were not often cartographers. Yet it was the report of one of these, the elder Scoresby, to Sir Joseph Banks, in 1817, that reawoke interest in Arctic exploration.² He had reached lat. $81^{\circ} 30'$. Banks and Sir John Barrow³ pressed for renewed attack on the ice-bound regions. The result of their pressure was a series of voyages and sledge journeys lasting for forty years; and the names of Ross, Rae, Back, Richardson, Dease, Simpson, Beechey, McClintock, became almost as celebrated as those of Franklin and Parry.

These voyages had two objectives, not to be confused : the North-west Passage and the North Pole itself. The erroneous belief, perhaps originally Russian, fostered by American navigators in the fifties and sixties, and not wholly exploded by Nares in 1875, that there was open water round the Pole itself, led to many disappointments. There were but two obvious routes to the Pole, one far to the east of Greenland, by Spitzbergen, the other to the west of it by Baffin's Bay and Smith Sound; the entrance to this last had actually been seen by Baffin, who had reached lat. 78° . Franklin's first Arctic voyage in *Trent*, 1818, was in the former of these directions, and so was Parry's voyage of 1827, which attained (on sledges) the most northerly latitude ($82^{\circ} 45'$) reached before 1876. The

¹ In *The Possibility of approaching the North Pole*, by the Hon. D. Barrington, 1818, it appears, but with the legend, 'Baffin's Bay, according to the relation of W. Baffin in 1616, but not now believed'. In *Voyages into the Arctic Regions*, by John Barrow, F.R.S., 1818, it is wholly omitted. Of two charts in the Hydrographic Department, both published by Arrowsmith, one, dated Jan. 29th, 1818, gives the name but not the outline of the Bay; the other, of Feb. 1st, 1818, gives both name and outline.

² In 1822-3 the younger Scoresby made, in the intervals of whale-fishing, extensive surveys of the east coast of Greenland.

³ Secretary to the Admiralty, 1807-45, founder, 1830, of the Royal Geographical Society.

southward drift of the pack in summer was a problem on this route; for every painful mile he (Parry) pushed his sledges forward, the whole frozen sea under them carried him half a mile back.

The interest of the other objective, the North-west Passage, was much greater, the voyages were much more continuous, and were supplemented by several land journeys along the northern coast of Canada. The voyages of 1818-19 completely restored the credit of Baffin. His Bay was rediscovered and the westward-leading channel from it, Lancaster Sound, was explored by Parry, who carried the British flag in *Hecla* through Barrow Strait to Melville Island (where he found impenetrable ice), i. e. more than half-way from Greenland to Bering Strait. In 1831 (Sir) James Clerk Ross discovered the Magnetic Pole in Boothia, just north of lat. 70°. Franklin and John Richardson of Dumfries, who, as a boy, had known Robert Burns, made a terrible land journey in 1819 from Hudson's Bay to the mouth of the Coppermine River, and thence explored the coast eastwards to Dease Strait. In 1825-6 Franklin, on a similar journey westwards, passed the mouth of the Mackenzie River, and attained his farthest west at Point Beechey, while Beechey himself, coming to meet him through Bering Strait, got to Point Barrow, within half a degree of longitude of their proposed rendezvous. In 1833 Back found the Fish River, north-west of Hudson's Bay. In 1839 Dease and Simpson joined up the discoveries of Franklin, Beechey, and Back, and Rae's survey of 1846-7 completed the northern map of Canada.¹

Franklin was employed elsewhere from 1830 till 1843,² and on his return found that *Erebus* and *Terror* had just returned from the Antarctic. They were now, 1845, commissioned by Franklin and Crozier, fitted with auxiliary

¹ Cary's Atlas, 1811, knows nothing of this coast between Icy Cape and Davis Strait, except Mackenzie River from Slave Lake to 'sea seen by Mackenzie 1789', and Coppermine River to 'sea seen by Hearne 1771'.

² In the Mediterranean till 1833, and as Governor of Tasmania till 1843.

steam, and provisioned for three years. Franklin was nearly sixty, but he had unrivalled experience. He was right in his choice of route, the most southerly of all, between King William's Land and Victoria Land;¹ and his ships, when finally abandoned in April 1848, were within ninety miles of the known water leading to Dease Strait.² When for three years no news had come of his adventure, feeling in England was stirred, and successive search expeditions were equipped (American explorers readily assisting), each of which added much to cartography and to our knowledge of Polar conditions. In 1854 Rae brought the first proof of some great disaster. In 1859 McClintock³ in the yacht *Fox*, equipped by Lady Franklin, brought back a written record, in Crozier's hand, of the abandonment of the ships, of the death of Sir John, and of the effort of the survivors to reach Hudson's Bay up the Fish River. The rest was unfolded by the Esquimaux, who had seen the starving white men drop dead as they walked. Franklin is fully entitled to be called the discoverer of the Passage, but it is also clear that no practical use can be made of his discovery.

From 1859 there was a long gap in the record till 1875, when (Sir) George Nares, with *Alert* and *Discovery*, in an attempt on the Pole through Smith Sound and Robeson Channel, mapped the west and north-west coast of Greenland, to long. 50°, and the north coast of Grinnell Land to long. 85°. One of his officers, Markham, reached by sledge the farthest northern latitude attained in our period, 83° 20', i. e. 400 miles from the Pole, and this should have exploded the notion of open water. So rough was the ice that Markham's party, many of whom suffered severely from scurvy, was seldom able to make two miles a day.⁴

The still more forbidding Antarctic was tackled only twice

¹ He made, indeed, a northerly detour up Wellington Channel at the west end of Barrow Strait, but retraced his track.

² It was by Franklin's route that Amundsen got through, 1903-6.

³ McClintock had made three previous Arctic voyages and was the father of the modern system of sledge travelling.

⁴ See Markham's *Journal*, in Nares's *Narrative of a Voyage to the Polar Sea*, 2 vols., 1878, i. 351 sqq.

during our period. Cook reaching $71^{\circ} 10'$, had destroyed the legend of a great *Terra Australis Incognita*, or had shifted it northwards to the present Australia and New Zealand. In 1823 a sealing skipper, Weddell, in *Jane of Leith*, a brig of 160 tons, and the still smaller *Beaufoy* of 65, found open water in $74^{\circ} 15'$. His story reads like a leaf out of Drake's. He charted, roughly, the South Shetlands, South Orkneys, and South Georgia. In 1839 (Sir) James Clerk Ross, with *Erebus* and *Terror*, got four degrees south of Weddell's limit, sighted two great mountains, one of them an active volcano, and named them after his ships. He traced the coast of South Victoria Land, fringed by an impenetrable ice reef, for nearly five hundred miles. He found no mammalian life, only one bird, the penguin ('and him half a fish'), and always terrible weather. Whalers have since that date made increasing use of the Southern seas, after almost exterminating the right-whale in the Northern. That any practical use can be made of 'Antarctica' is not likely, though Scott's and Shackleton's gallant deeds have revealed most of its dreary secrets. It is otherwise with the Arctic Regions; for, with the development of aerial navigation, they will be within easy reach of Europe; their climate, rough as it is, is not beyond human defiance, they teem with bird life in the summer, and perhaps, before a century has elapsed, their southern fringe at least may be advertised (if the mosquitoes can be defeated) as the 'paradise of the sportsman and the tourist, the sanatorium of the invalid'.

What the North-west Passage was to the sailors, the sources of the Nile were to the adventurers on land.¹ Classical tradition about the 'Mountains of the Moon' lent enchantment to the search. Regions Nero never knew (though he sent an expedition to explore them) Boadicea's²

¹ Livingstone himself recognized this; it was the Nile that was drawing him all the last twenty years of his life. (See *Last Journals*, i. 337, and many other passages in the book.)

² I observe with pain, that the learned now call her Boudicca: so, in Tacitus, *Ann.* xiv. 31, *Agric.* 15, 16, O.C.T., but there are several MS. variations. Ptolemy knew that the White Nile rose in two lakes or marshes, about lat. 5° N.; his *Lunae Montes* are small. He also

posterity were to search for, and, as it has turned out, to sway.

The perils of the search were hardly less than the Arctic perils, the horrors were infinitely greater. Man was vile in both, but in the Arctic, if always dirty, he was seldom worse than thievish. In Africa he was often terrible and bloody as well. The continent had been for centuries the hunting-ground of Arab slave-dealers,¹ and it was a grievous thing, both for explorers and missionaries, to be indebted for information, and occasionally for personal safety, to such wretches. The native races were incessantly at war with, or at the mercy of, the Arabs, and seldom at peace with each other. From eastern ports Arabs, nominally subject to the Sultan of Zanzibar, had pushed far inland, carved out chieftainships for themselves, and set their new dependants raiding for slaves against weaker tribes. Livingstone was the first person to reveal this state of things.²

In 1815 Portugal still possessed a settlement at the mouth of the Gambia ('Portuguese Guinea'), a strip just south of the Congo delta ('Angola' or 'Loanda'), and a still bigger strip of the East coast, from Cape Delgado to Delagoa Bay; but the Arabs, in the Seventeenth Century, had taken all her more northern ports on that coast. She was, however, not inactive in the interior, and Livingstone frequently testifies to the kindness he received from her officials, also to the fact that such 'civilization' as the natives possessed (cereals, knew the Niger, as a great interior river, about lat. 15° N., but not its mouth.

¹ In Nyassaland this was fairly recent, the American markets having been mainly supplied from the west coast, while the Moslem East had got its slaves north of the Equator. In 1877 Doughty found Arabia full of African slaves, and believed Mecca to be the centre of an active trade. (See *Travels in Arabia Deserta*, *passim*; see also Livingstone, *Last Journals*, i. 81; Johnston, *History of the Colonisation of Africa by Alien Races*, Cambridge, 1899, esp. p. 50.)

² When in 1879 we took over the protectorate of Zanzibar, it became, as Sierra Leone and Liberia were on the west coast, a refuge for freed or runaway slaves. Portugal had (nominally) abolished the slave-trade in 1830, but retained slavery in her African colonies till 1878.

fruits, domestic animals, methods of labour), came from the Portuguese. More than once their travellers had crossed the continent, they had seen Nyassa, and perhaps other great lakes. Farther north, they had once known something of the Sahara and, at least by tradition, of Timbuctoo.

The first great British explorer of Africa was James Bruce. He had rambled among Roman ruins in Algeria and Syria before he tackled the Nile problem via Abyssinia (1769). He found the sources of the Blue Nile, and believed it to be the main river. After abundant perils and horrors, he reached Assouan, then the frontier of Turkish Egypt, in 1772. On his return to England he told such amazing tales (afterwards entirely vindicated) that no one believed him.¹ In 1795 Mungo Park, at the instigation of Sir Joseph Banks, attacked West Africa from the mouth of the Gambia. He struck the Niger, and followed it down towards Timbuctoo, always believing it to be identical with the far more southerly Congo, whose deltaic mouths had long been known. On his second (1805) expedition, from which he never returned, there is reason to suppose that he descended the Niger far below Timbuctoo.

Our next efforts were in the same area as Park's. Alexander Laing discovered the source of the Niger in 1822-3, Denham and Clapperton crossed the Sahara from Tripoli, and discovered Lake Chad; Laing's second journey, 1825-6, took him from Tripoli to Timbuctoo itself, and he was killed by the Touaregs, just after leaving it, on his return. Clapperton opened the lower Niger and reached Sokoto, where he died in 1827. By 1832 the course of the Niger was fairly known; Congo and White Nile were still to be long in darkness.

Cary's map of 1811, which makes a complete mess of North-West Africa, has a fairly accurate Nile up to 'Halisoon', near the modern Khartoum, attributes the source to Bruce's Blue Nile, but makes both this and the 'White River' rise in a vast range of 'Mountains of the

¹ Livingstone (*Last Journals*, i. 341) calls Bruce 'a greater traveller than any of us'.

Moon' stretching across the continent about lat. 10° North. Then, from Cape Guardafui to the mouth of the Zambesi ('Luabo'), at about eighty miles from the east coast, it marks another long chain called 'Lapata Mountains or the Spine of the World'. Behind these, and connected with the Zambesi system, is 'Lake Maravi', a blend of Nyassa and Tanganyika, and nearly of their shape. Cary's Congo is a miserable affair, only traceable in the Portuguese Colony; the vague expression of 'Lower Guinea' covers all its real basin.¹

In 1849 two Germans, in the service of the Church Missionary Society, went inland north-west from Mombassa, saw Mounts Kilimanjaro and Kenia, and brought rumours of great lakes on the Equator. The Equator, nearly at the centre of the continent, does, in fact, fairly delimit the sphere of Livingstone from that of Burton, Speke, Grant, and Baker. Richard Burton of the Indian Army, linguist, scholar, and swordsman, had already disguised himself as a practising Mussulman, and travelled to Medina and Mecca in 1853. After their vain attempt in 1854 to penetrate Somaliland, he and Captain John Speke were selected in 1856 by the Royal Geographical Society to search for the sources of the White Nile. Starting from Zanzibar, they reached Lake Tanganyika in January 1858, and partially explored it. Both suffered severely from illness, and Burton had to be left behind when Speke went on northward. Speke reached in the early autumn the greatest of all the lakes, and named it the Victoria Nyanza; he did not explore it, and he found Burton, who had been mapping the northern end of Tanganyika, incredulous when he rejoined him. There was a quarrel (Burton, often 'ill to his friends', was 'waur to his foes'), and they returned separately to England in May 1859. The Geographical Society upheld Speke's

¹ Small variations of these features appear in Malte-Brun's *Atlas complet* (Paris, 1812), Pinkerton's *Modern Atlas* (London, 1812), Whittle and Laurie's *Imperial Sheet Atlas* (London, 1813), Playfair's *New General Atlas* (London, 1814). Evidently all that was really known was the tradition of Antiquity.

view, that he had found at least the main source of the Nile; but his story was not wholly unquestioned until Stanley vindicated him in the seventies.

In April 1860 Speke and Captain James Grant started on a further quest; this time they saw the Nile issue from the lake at Urondogani, in July 1862. Speke did not, however, follow it down (for it is there more like Ptolemy's *palus* than a river), but made straight for Gondokoro. Here he met, in February 1863, (Sir) Samuel Baker and his wife, with a large party equipped by themselves. He gave them all his maps, and such good information, that Baker, although soon deserted by most of his men, and only saved by slave-hunters, was able to strike the White Nile at Karma and follow it up to the second great Nilotic lake, which he named Albert Nyanza (March 1864). He explored a portion of its eastern shore, and reached Khartoum, on his return journey, in May 1865. As governor of the Soudan for Khedive Ismail, 1869-74, Baker added much to our geographical knowledge of that district. Speke reached home in June 1863, and was accidentally killed next year. Burton long remained sceptical and hostile.

A whole Odyssey of adventures awaited Richard Burton; as Consul at Fernando Po, he explored the Cameroon mountains and the lower Congo; in Brazil he rode over vast stretches of South America; from Damascus he dived into the Syrian desert and revealed the first traces of the still mysterious 'Hittite' race. His last Consulate, from 1872 till his death in 1890, was at Trieste, and even from that place he pursued his Arabian travels.

While the Nile was thus yielding up its secret north of the Equator, the greatest of all explorers was wrestling with that, and kindred secrets, to the south. David Livingstone, born at Blantyre of humble parentage in 1813, educated himself while working as a boy in a cotton-mill. When grown up he studied medicine at Glasgow, with a view to missionary work, and his first task as an ordained missionary was the establishment of mission-stations, northwards from Port Elizabeth, South Africa, in 1841. His linguistic gift

was great, greater still were his courage, his good humour, his power of conciliating the wildest savages, and his nobility of character. Bodily strength and endurance of the rarest kind were added; he could fall asleep at a moment's notice, and he could starve for weeks (though on such occasions his dreams, like those of Arctic travellers, were always of good dinners) with cheerful equanimity. Early in his career his left arm was badly mauled by a lion, and he never afterwards had full use of it. The slave-trade was his Satan, yet he could see good points in, and he won the friendship of, more than one slave-dealing Arab. The Transvaal Boers (i.e. the early *vortrekkers*),¹ being themselves slave-buyers and ill-treating their slaves, were always bitterly hostile, and once, in 1852, tried to kill him. The passion for exploration, fully developed in him by 1845, never caused him to lose sight of his earlier object, that of preaching the gospel, but he soon recognized that the destruction of the slave-trade was a necessary preliminary. On an early journey, with two English companions, across the Kalahari desert of Bechuanaland, he discovered Lake Ngami. In 1851 he touched the upper water of the Zambesi.

That, however, which is reckoned 'Livingstone's First Journey', 1853-6, was across the continent and back. He traversed the watershed between the Zambesi and the lower Congo, and reached the Portuguese coast at Loanda in April 1854. He returned in September, riding on ox-back, struck the Zambesi in November 1855, and reached the East coast at Quilimane in May 1856. He had met many enemies, but the tsetse fly was perhaps the worst of all. His reception in England, especially from the geographers, was worthy of his great feat, and he was forthwith appointed British Consul at Quilimane. From that port he set out on his 'Second Journey', 1858-64,² with the support of the Government,

¹ *Vid. supra*, p. 137 note 4.

² 'The second Journey may be regarded as the first indirect step towards the foundation of British Central Africa.' (Johnston, 53.) Blantyre, its capital, founded 1876, reminds us of Livingstone's birthplace.

and with several English helpers. His discovery of Lake Nyassa, in September 1859, enabled him in 1861 to lead the pioneers of the 'Universities Mission to Central Africa' to their intended destination in Nyassaland, not without a fight with slave-raiders on the way. Livingstone's wife, who had temporarily joined him, died on the Zambesi in April 1862; in May 1863 his last English companion, Kirk, was obliged to leave him, and in July he got orders from home to withdraw the expedition. For some months he struggled on westward from Nyassa towards a lake of which he had long heard as 'Bemba', but finally, having nothing left wherewith to pay his men, had to return to the coast early in 1864.¹ Unable to sell his river-steamer there, he navigated her to Bombay, at all risks, and had to borrow money for his passage to England. He remained a year at home, and started on his Third (and last) Journey from the East coast, in March 1866.

Disaster dogged his steps throughout, but by the end of the year he had reached the river Loangwa; thence ensued a long series of half-starved wanderings, northwards, southwards, northwards again, till he sighted Tanganyika in April 1867. Here he nearly died of fever, for all his drugs had been stolen by deserters. In July 1868 he at last discovered Lake 'Bemba', now called 'Bangweolo'. In March 1869 he was back at Ujiji on the eastern shore of Tanganyika, where he had three months' rest, and found a few stores. Westwards again he walked, now in search of the river Lualaba, which he discovered in March 1871, after viewing endless horrors of cannibalism and slave-raiding, all faithfully recorded in the second volume of his *Last Journals*. In October he was again at Ujiji, very nearly 'done'.

In England, as early as 1867, reports of his death had roused public opinion, and search expeditions had been sent. Henry Stanley, employed by an American newspaper, at last brought substantial relief to the great explorer, whom he found at Ujiji on October 28, 1871. Together they explored

¹ Had he then been able to go on he would probably have discovered the upper Congo system.

the northern end of Tanganyika; but Livingstone would neither abandon the idea that his Lualaba was part of the Nile system,¹ nor return to Europe with Stanley. Stanley started for home, leaving Livingstone in fairly good case, in March 1872, and in August the old man went off again to map his beloved Lake Bangweolo district, intending to go on still farther west to the 'Four Fountains', of which he was now always dreaming as the main African river-sources. He reached the lake shores in April 1873, having been very ill all the journey; his amazing courage, and the remnants of his fine physique, made death come very slowly, but he died, aged sixty, on 30 April-1st May, 1873. His body was brought to England and buried in Westminster Abbey a year later.

It was reserved for Captain Cameron, head of the last English relief expedition, to determine that the Lualaba was no tributary of the Nile, but the upper Congo, and to cross the continent, not far from Livingstone's old track, to Angola. It was reserved for Stanley in 1874-7 to circumnavigate both Tanganyika and Victoria Nyanza, thence to strike the Lualaba-Congo, and, in ten wonderful months, to descend it to its mouth. On a still later journey Stanley, going up the Congo and the Aruwihimi, discovered the third Nilotic lake, naming it Albert Edward Nyanza, discovered also the third great mountain, Ruwenzori. Stanley's additions to geographical knowledge seem to put him at the head of the long roll of explorers. His courage and endurance were as great, but his methods of forcing his way through difficulties were not so scrupulous, as those of Livingstone, who was one of the finest gentlemen that ever lived. Stanley was also *felix opportunitate* to a greater extent than any of his predecessors. They, groping in the dark, had done the spade-work, and had made the 'theoretical discoveries', at which Livingstone, himself a great exponent of 'theory', yet delighted to laugh.

Another country, to which Sir Joseph Banks and his brethren of the Royal Society, were turning their eyes in

¹ His doubts, however, frequently recurred (see ii. 188, 202, &c.).

1815, was the half-desert, and almost wholly unknown, peninsula of Arabia.¹ Something was guessed of its geography from translations of Arabic books, something known, at least of the coasts, from the early Portuguese navigators and from the pioneers of the East India Company.² A Dane, Niebuhr, had travelled in the south-east and published his travels in 1772. The recent puritan (Wahabi) movement in Arabia had frightened the Porte a good deal, for it looked like a fresh impact of Islam, from its original home, on the West. One of the early tasks of Mehemet Ali and his son Ibrahim was the reconquest of Arabia for the Sultan, and this was just beginning when Burckhardt, a Swiss, was sent out by Banks to report on the country. Burckhardt travelled in safety to Mecca and Medina in 1814, and his travels were published in 1829. He was only one of some twenty Europeans who are known to have visited Mecca (though few have visited both Holy Cities) since the early sixteenth century.

After Burckhardt's time difficulties increased. Moslem fanaticism revived, and, even on one of the four old caravan routes,³ a non-Moslem would henceforth carry his life in his hand.⁴ Another difficulty was older still; half Arabia is sheer desert, and a death by thirst, even more unpleasant than a swifter death by religion, is quite possible for a traveller who loses his way.

¹ The following pages owe everything to *The Penetration of Arabia*, by my friend Mr. D. G. Hogarth, who has kindly permitted me to make the fullest use of his book.

² The Company did not occupy Aden till 1839, and then only as a coaling station.

³ 1. The well-known Hauran road from Damascus to Mecca—the line of the present railway. 2. The older commercial route, Aleppo to Basra (Bussorah) and the Persian Gulf. 3. The eighth-century route from Bagdad, by Basra, to Mecca and Medina. 4. The 'Indian route' from Khatif on the Persian Gulf to the same Holy Cities.

⁴ 'I have heard from credible Moslems that nearly no Haj passes in which some unhappy persons are not put to death (*sc.* at Mecca) as intruded Christians.' (Doughty, *Travels in Arabia Deserta*, Cambridge, 1888, ii. 52.)

In 1819 Captain Sadleir, on a political mission to Ibrahim, marched, with a considerable caravan, across the peninsula from Khatif to Medina; he was not allowed to enter that city, and he saw the minarets of Mecca only from afar. He is the first European who is known to have crossed Central Arabia. In 1835 Lieut. Wellsted, R.N., explored part of Oman in the south-east, always in danger from raiding Wahabis. In 1853 Richard Burton, disguised as an Afghan doctor, made, and two years later wrote his account of, his *Pilgrimage to El-Medina and Mecca*; he went mainly in order to gain the fame of a *hadji* (religious pilgrim), and so prepare himself for safer travel in other Moslem countries. Twenty-four years later the same ardent traveller explored the 'Land of Midian', i.e. the mountains east and south-east of the Gulf of Akaba at the head of the Red Sea. In 1870 Captain Miles explored Yemen from Aden, and almost looked into the forbidden valleys of Hadramaut, the half-fabled land of 'odorous gums and balm'.

In 1865 appeared a book called *Central and Eastern Arabia* by W. G. Palgrave—so picturesque a book that doubts have been thrown on the truth of its story. Palgrave was of Jewish origin, a great linguist and Orientalist; at the time of his travels he was a Jesuit priest at Damascus, and he is believed to have undertaken his journey at the instance of Napoleon III, who was hankering after French protectorates in the Near East. To travel, as a Christian doctor, from Maan, on the Pilgrims' way, to Jauf, and thence across the northern desert to Hayil, was a difficult, but not a unique feat; what was unique was Palgrave's penetration from Hayil to Riadh in southern Nejd, the very centre of Wahabi fanaticism. What influences there protected this adventurer in 1862-3, or who conveyed him safely thence to the Persian Gulf, we do not know. Another brave journey was that of Colonel Pelly, British Resident at Bushire, from Koweit on the Gulf to Riadh, in order to obtain a political interview with the Wahabi Emir; Pelly made no pretence at disguise, but rode swiftly thither and back, no doubt in serious danger, but untouched.

More remarkable than any of these was Charles Montagu Doughty, who, impelled simply by a scientific curiosity, and by a scholar's desire of copying ancient inscriptions, alone and without money or friends, relying on his medical skill to win hospitality, started with the Pilgrim Caravan from Damascus in 1876, left it at Medain-Salih, and, from that point, wandered, generally in the company of wandering Bedouins, for two years over the whole north of Central Arabia. He was in constant danger, in amazing privations, and was almost killed outside Mecca (which he did not enter), just before his escape to Jedda in 1878. His *Travels in Arabia Deserta*,¹ published in 1888, are our only real authority for the tent-life of the Bedouins. Doughty, though he dressed as an Arab, made no pretence of being anything but an English Christian, and utterly refused to purchase safety by a single act or word of apostasy.

Finally in 1879 Mr. Wilfrid Blunt and his wife, with powerful recommendations from a Sheikh in Palmyra to his kinsman, the Emir of Hayil, crossed the northern desert from Jauf to Hayil in order to study the Arab horse in his native country; and Lady Anne Blunt published, in 1881, *A Pilgrimage to Nejd*. All disguised travellers have had to ask themselves whether or no their disguise was penetrated, how much they owed to the forbearance of such as may have suspected them, how much to the shrewdness of Emirs (who may not have wished to embroil themselves with their own suzerain by murdering Europeans), and how far the power of such Emirs would avail against the fanaticism of their (very nominal) subjects. Doughty and the Blunts alone seem to have relied on the unwillingness, even of the most lawless Bedouins, of the fiercest fanatics in the towns, to violate the canons of hospitality towards honourable strangers.

Thirst was also to be the enemy of the explorer in the last found, yet most primitive, of the continents, Australia, whose interior is a vast uneven plain about 1,500 feet above

¹ 'A Georgic of the Desert.' (Hogarth, *Penetration of Arabia*, 276.)

sea-level. Near the edges of this table-land runs, except in the central south, a chain of broken hills, rising in places to the dignity of mountains, which intercept nearly all the yearly rainfall. From the outer face of the hills water can force its way seawards, and make real rivers; from the inner face it may begin as a gushing stream, but, when followed down, it becomes a series of stagnant swampy pools (often locally salt) or loses itself in sands. The first settlements in such a country would be on the 'brim of the hat', between the mountains and the sea.

Nothing whatever was known of the interior for a quarter of a century after the establishment of the first penal settlement in New South Wales in 1788. Not for ten years was Tasmania known to be an island, not till 1803 was the continent circumnavigated by Matthew Flinders. The drought of 1813 led to the first serious exploration, led by Blaxland, of the hill country behind Sydney. Fine sheep pasture was then discovered, and the first inland township, Bathurst, was founded in 1815. This discovery, extended westwards and south-westwards in 1817-18 by Oxley and Evans, brought the first contingent of free emigrants. In the twenties the fertile lands of the future Victoria and South Australia began to be revealed, together with the courses of the rivers Darling, Lachlan, Murrumbidgee, and Murray. These are inseparably connected with the names of Captain Sturt, of the Dorset Regiment, and Sir Thomas Mitchell. Sturt's great voyage of 1828 in a boat put together when he first struck this river system, took thirty-three days down to the sea, and nearly twice that time on the return journey; he was more than once in danger from large masses of degraded savages, yet had no actual fighting, and lost not one of his men.¹ Mitchell, who in 1833 had graduated as an explorer on the upper Darling, verified Sturt in 1836, and found, on the way, far better land than Sturt had believed to exist.

Meanwhile in 1829 the whole continent had been definitely

¹ Sturt, at the end of his noble life, prided himself on never having killed a native.

claimed as British, and there were already permanent settlements in Queensland and in the Northern Territory in 1824, in West Australia in 1829, in South Australia in 1835, in Victoria before 1836. Some of these were nearly a thousand miles apart, and explorers were fired with the idea of effecting junctions between them by land. Three delusive theories concerning the interior long held the field: first, that there was a great west-flowing river, from the back of Queensland to the Indian Ocean; secondly, that there was a vast salt lake, thirdly, a great mountain range, in the centre of the continent. When these were successively exploded, opinion settled on a 'great desert'; yet this is beyond the truth, for the sandstone desert, yielding only *spinifex* 'scrub', alternates abruptly with grass-bearing limestone, through which water occasionally percolates.

In 1837-40 (Sir) George Grey explored the west coast up to the Murchison and Gascoyne rivers, but hardly penetrated inland. Edward Eyre, 'Protector of the Aborigines', afterwards the well-known Governor of Jamaica, after making excursions northwards in 1839 from Adelaide to Lake Torrens, rode and walked—an almost waterless walk—from Adelaide to Albany on King George's Sound, and proved the barrenness of the land-fringe of the Great Bight (1840). The heroic Sturt, in 1844-5, made the first serious attempt to cross from south to north; he discovered the waters of Cooper's Creek and the Barcoo, which run to the salt Lake Eyre (this lake itself was only revealed by Babbage in 1858), and were long believed to be the heads of the mythical west-flowing river. Sturt almost reached the centre of the continent, but found mere stony desert, and suffered terribly as he returned. Leichhardt in the same year, starting from the upper Darling, reached Port Essington in the far north, but was lost, four years later, in an attempt to cross the continent from east to west. Many expeditions were sent to search for him, and all added to our knowledge of the eastern half of Australia. In 1860 a large and well-equipped expedition started northwards from Melbourne under Burke and Wills, but was thoroughly

mismanaged; it did reach the Flinders River, on the Gulf of Carpentaria, in February 1861, but only one man survived the return journey.¹

The task was finally accomplished, with far more modest resources, and after five attempts in previous years, by John McDouall Stuart, who had been with Sturt in 1844. He fairly crossed, with ten companions, in nine months of 1861-2, from Adelaide to the River Adelaide near Port Darwin; he lost no men, although he nearly died on the return journey, and never recovered health or sight. He took a more westerly course than the others, and the telegraph line, completed in 1872, follows his track to-day. In 1874 Forrest crossed the desert of Western Australia, from Perth to the telegraph line and thence to Adelaide, and in the next year Giles, who was said to have the 'constitution of a camel',² crossed from Adelaide to Perth and back again. Such a land can have none of the fascination of continents younger in geological time, yet full of buried cities and lost civilizations, gorgeous landscapes, and mighty rivers; but the men who explored it carried out their task with a heroism which has seldom been surpassed in any quarter of the globe.

In most of the activities just mentioned, and especially in Literature, Science, and Exploration, the record of our period is fine. It is the record of a great People, sober externally, but, in its innermost self, romantic and disdainful of bounds; a People always anxious to avoid self-conscious expression of its best ideas, but one that has ridden over great expanses of thought with a far vision and a loose rein. In the words of our greatest living writer, an Englishman will

Set his lance above mischance
And ride the barrière;
Oh, hit or miss—how little 'tis!

¹ The story of the finding of the survivor, King, is printed in E. Favenc's *History of Australian Exploration*, 419 sqq.

² Camels were first imported for use on inland journeys in 1843.

His lady may or may not be there to crown him; he will be glad if she is, but it is the grim lists that matter most. Much of this fine quality has been, all unknown to themselves, the heritage of the 'Philistine' middle class, as well as of the intellectuals. The same spirit is often to be found in the 'dumb classes', the peasant, the artisan, and even the unskilled labourer. Who could count the thousands upon thousands of our soldiers in the late War who proved themselves worthy successors of Sir Francis Doyle's *Private of the Buffs* of 1860?—

Ambassador from Britain's crown,
And type of all her race.

There is romance, too, even in trade and in manufacture, and those Britons who have carved out fortunes thereby have generally taken long views and great risks, and, if often vulgar, have seldom been narrow or 'professional' in their private lives.

If we were to tabulate—say from Palmer's *Index to The Times*—the subjects of the public meetings held during our period, we should get a fair idea of the things that most interested the nation. We should find two main groups, 'meetings of indignation or protest on some subject connected with politics, religion, or society, and meetings to promote some benevolent object and to raise funds to further it; in fact, meetings *anti*-something, and meetings *pro*-something. Again, a cross-division might be made into meetings about British affairs, and those about our neighbours' affairs; for, intensely insular as was our outlook, our sympathies were very much the reverse. Often, indeed, we too closely resembled the old gentleman in Terence's comedy,¹ who excused his meddlesomeness on the ground that, 'because he was a man, all human affairs were his province'.² Mixed with vindictive passions and narrow views as our national movements too often were, a broad humanity,

¹ *Heautontimoroumenos*, I. i. 25.

² E. g. the Pope was not in our province, but we believed the duty of denouncing him to be paramount, and found the delight of it to be inexhaustible.

almost an idealism, generally lay beneath the surface. Look downwards towards the *mobile vulgus* (the origin of our word *mob*); how few English mobs, ignorant, noisy, and wrong-headed as they generally are, have been violent to blood-letting since the Eighteenth Century! There was no crowd so good humoured as a Nineteenth-Century London crowd; the lifted hand and the 'move on, please' of the single policeman were proverbial.¹

Yet there was another side to the picture. I have alluded in an earlier chapter to the 'most grimy of all revolutions'.² Few of the 'inventions and discoveries' of the sixty-five years that followed Waterloo failed to add external ugliness, squalor, and hideous noise to our landscape, and ugliness is a foe to humanity, whatever the utilitarians may say. The miles of cheap red-brick houses³ that began to encircle all our great towns, our ever-increasing network of railways, our smoke-belching factory chimneys, are horrible things, and we ought not to forget that they are horrible. We shall never again look on a line-of-battle-ship under sail (con-

¹ In the above paragraph I am not speaking of our own day. Since 1880 class-hatred has been fostered by politicians, and has grown apace, as it did during the Chartist decade. The Trade-Union movement, which, in the middle of the Nineteenth Century, had some ideals behind it, has now become a sordid scramble for more wages and less work (work that shall also be avowedly dishonest), as well as a movement of bitter hatred against wealth and intelligence. And, on the other side, the heartless display of wealth by the 'new rich' has gone far to stimulate this hatred; it would be difficult to estimate the harm done to us by American standards of rich vulgarity. Yet even to-day, in spite of these things, in spite, also, of the pernicious example set by the success of professional murderers in Ireland, I believe that our people, as a whole, will not easily be tempted to commit violent acts, nor readily to condone violence. They will not wholly lose their good humour, their imperturbability. The recent Great War has proved not only their intense virility, but also that they are capable of putting hatreds and sordid thoughts aside for real union in a Sacred Cause.

² *Vid. supra*, p. 31.

³ These were at first horribly insanitary too, and their sanitary condition is by no means perfect even to-day.

cerning which I have quoted Ruskin's opinion in an earlier volume of this book ¹), and the mightiest Super-Dreadnought is a hideous substitute for that.

In such circumstances it is perhaps not a matter for wonder that neither the British shopkeeper nor the British artisan possessed, between 1815 and 1880, the good taste which it was not uncommon to find in his French or German equal. His evening pleasures, and his holiday pleasures, were as a rule either 'rowdy', or sordid, or silly, or, at the best, maudlin-sentimental, and many of our very-well-to-do classes often showed an equal lack of refinement. The 'merry England' of the Elizabethan Renaissance may, or may not, have been killed by Puritanism. Yet the Puritans at least loved music, and we were a most musical people until the close of the Seventeenth Century. We have entirely ceased to be so; and, with the taste for music, the middle class seem to have lost all other culture also. We have hardly listened, since that date, to a single great composer, a single great singer or player, who was not of foreign birth, or trained abroad. Though we have had many charming comedians, we have had hardly one great dramatic artist since the days of Garrick and the days of Mrs. Siddons. The Italian opera became fashionable in the first half of the Nineteenth Century, and died an early and natural death because it was wholly a matter of fashion. A small and intelligent audience could always be gathered at the Crystal Palace and at several other centres to listen to great foreign music; in the first year of Victoria's reign there was a 'Festival' at Birmingham at which Mendelssohn played one of Bach's fugues and heard his own oratorio of *St. Paul* performed! Yet, as a rule, famous foreigners, whether singers or actors, were a sort of 'show' or became 'the fashion' for people who could not appreciate their music or understand the language in which they acted. Shakespeare on the stage spelt ruin to theatrical managers, unless his plays were made, by extravagant scenery, into a gorgeous spectacle, or unless the leading part was played

¹ Vol. ii, p. 312, Ruskin, *Harbours of England*, 23.

by some 'lion of the hour'. Meanwhile the taste of too many classes of our people ran to the music hall, the circus, the tight-rope walker (Blondin's great year was in 1861), or the burlesque, as it now runs to the American kinema film.

The same People has also occasionally manifested a rather un-English habit of getting wildly excited about very absurd things or individuals—Queen Caroline, 1820; the Eglinton Tournament, 1839;¹ the Tichborne case (which almost monopolized public attention from 1871 to 1873); the Shah of Persia, 1873; Messrs. Moody and Sankey, 1875; or the fate of an African elephant in later years. These, and the passionate interest taken in various forms of sport, by men who understood nothing of its details, were curious excrescences on the mind of the nation, were, at best, perhaps safety-valves to let its pent-up energy escape. At their worst some of these things fostered the evil habit of gambling, which is deeply engrained in us and has ruined many homes.

Drunkenness unquestionably decreased, in spite of the efforts of fanatics against the sober use of alcohol, and, with drunkenness, decreased also brutality, both in crime and in ordinary life. Duelling died hard, but it died in the forties; Lord Shaftesbury was one of the first persons who had the courage to refuse a challenge from a brother peer (1853). Prize-fighting died a little harder; the famous battle—a drawn one—between the giant Heenan and Tom Sayers was in April 1860; Tom King beat Heenan, after twenty-five rounds, in 1863. Dickens strove hard, if often without knowledge or discretion, for all humane causes, and he had the popular ear as no one else had; it was his letter to *The Times* in 1849, describing the horrible scenes which he had just witnessed at a public execution outside Newgate, that roused opinion against the publicity. At the last public execution there, in May 1868, 'the number

¹ Garibaldi was, of course, anything but 'absurd', and was a very true hero, but the way in which London 'went mad' about him on his visit in 1864, bordered on the absurd.

of spectators was not large and they were observed to conduct themselves with unusual decorum'.

The so-called emancipation of women, and their education far above the standard which satisfied Queen Victoria and Miss Pinkerton, had begun before the end of our period. But the competition of women with men in the learned professions, their claim to force an entrance to the older Universities, their somewhat noisier claim to enjoy the parliamentary franchise, were still things of the future. 'Do you believe in the equality of the sexes, Miss Wilhelmina?' 'Certainly I do.' 'Then I need not give up my chair to you'—this was, in 1880, still a dilemma. And, now that such situations have ceased to be productive of dilemmas, we have still to face the question whether the changes of the last forty years in this, and in other parallel directions, will tend or will not tend to raise the moral, the intellectual, and the physical standard of our race.

Continuous improvement is, as Aristotle long ago said, the only justification for the continuous existence of States or institutions. For improvement to be continuous, there must be statesmen (not politicians), and they must have a goal and steer steadily towards it. The habit of political drifting will always be fatal. To-day the Ship of State is driving faster and faster over an ill-charted ocean, and the officers charged with the navigation are so anxiously watching the combers astern that they can seldom keep their eyes on the compass to hold her to her course.

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